

Germany Forces CompuServe to Censor Sex on the Internet

By Mitchell Martin
International Herald Tribune

Germany has imposed strict censorship on a portion of the Internet, forcing the on-line service CompuServe Inc. to ban worldwide access to about 200 bulletin boards that contain material with sexual content, the U.S.-based company said Thursday.

The action suggests an unfamiliarity with the workings of the worldwide computer network, however, because the banned areas are only a small part of the Internet, and access to many other sites that can contain pornographic materials remains unimpeded. But since CompuServe's technology did not allow it to restrict access only to Germany, the service has

"temporarily" halted access to the areas in question to all of its 4 million users around the world.

German officials "approached us about a month ago, they came to our offices," said William Giles, a spokesman for CompuServe in Columbus, Ohio. "They had heard about some things that were out there," he said, but CompuServe executives persuaded them that the offending material was on the Internet itself. The on-line service provides content of its own as well as access to the broader network.

All of the banned sites are Internet newsgroups, to which people can post documents such as letters and photographs. But the action does not affect sites on the World Wide Web, the multimedia portion of the Internet, which contains many commercial and

private sites that contain pornographic material.

CompuServe said Germany had identified 200 newsgroups with content that was illegal under German criminal law. Authorities are investigating newsgroups and other Internet content that may contain illegal pornographic material and pornography that is legal for adults but too explicit for children.

The German mandate was unexpected. The United States has been considering legislation to regulate pornographic content on computer services but none has been enacted.

Other countries have said they would restrict access to the Internet. Chinese officials have said they would set high fees for Internet use and seek other ways to control access, while Singapore has warned it

would act against anyone using the Internet to transmit pornographic or seditious material.

Because anybody with a computer can post information on the Internet, it is unclear how a government could prevent its citizens from receiving data it wants to ban. Germany's action would not stop its own citizens with direct access to the Internet from seeing the newsgroups. It could also encourage CompuServe users in other countries to use alternate providers of direct Internet access.

CompuServe and its larger rival, America Online Inc., are expanding their European presences as they seek to woo users who might seek direct Internet access

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González, In Trouble, Calls Election For March 3

Spanish Socialists Trail in Most Polls Following Scandals

MADRID — Buffeted by a series of political scandals and deprived of a working majority in Parliament, Prime Minister Felipe González on Thursday called elections for March 3.

The 53-year-old Socialist leader, who has reluctantly agreed to head his party's slate for the seventh time, moved quickly into the campaign mode with a warning to voters that a conservative government might not be able to provide Spain with the leadership it needs to move into the 21st century.

Elections were not due until June 1997, but in the aftermath of a series of scandals that rocked his government, Mr. González said last summer that he would set an earlier date. The scandals ranged from the government's role in secret death squads to combat Basque terrorism to illegal telephone tapping.

The scandals cost him the support of his Catalan ally, Jordi Pujol, the regional president. Mr. Pujol had backed Mr. González in Parliament since the Socialists lost their majority in June 1993, but became increasingly irritated by the scandals.

Allegations that the government backed and funded unlawful killings of suspected Basque guerrillas in a 1980s "dirty war" were the final straw for the Catalan leader, and he joined the opposition to defeat Mr. González's 1996 budget.

Mr. González said at a press conference that he had "no feeling of failure" in having had to call early elections.

The four-year legislature had its time cut short by a third, he said. But he added: "I don't think we've cut the electoral program by a third. I think we've carried out 80 or 90 percent of it."

Most polls indicate that the center-right Popular Party would win the most seats, if not an outright majority, in the 350-seat lower house of Parliament.

Parliament will be dissolved on Jan. 9. The campaign does not begin officially until Feb. 16, but Mr. González's comments after the final cabinet meeting of the year appeared to set the same tone as that used by the Socialists in June 1993 to warn voters of the danger on the right.

In those elections, the Socialists lost the absolute majority they had enjoyed since October 1982, when they first swept into power with a landslide victory and a clear mandate for change.

Immediately after the 1993 vote, the Popular Party leader, José María Aznar, began calling for new elections and Mr. González's resignation. The 42-year-old conservative leader contended that Mr. González was morally unfit to govern after having presided over the scandals.

Judicial investigations are under way on several of the scandals, and several trial dates have been set.

The March 3 elections will be the seventh since Spain returned to democracy in 1977, two years after the death of Franco ended his 36 years of authoritarian rule.

Mr. González had said he would prefer not to run again, but with the designation of the former foreign minister, Javier Solana Madariaga, as secretary-general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Socialists felt they had no other candidate of sufficient stature. (AP, Reuters)

Good So Far, Says Admiral Of NATO's Deployment

By John Pomfret
Washington Post Service

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Plans to deploy NATO forces into the heart of Bosnian Serbian territory have been speeded up "by months" because of initial compliance with the terms of the Dayton peace plan, Admiral Leighton Smith of the United States said Thursday.

Admiral Smith will journey Friday to the Serbian-held city of Banja Luka, the center of a region from which the Serbs have expelled an estimated 500,000 Muslims and Croats from their homes since 1992. He said he expected the Bosnian Serbs to invite the NATO-led operation to establish a headquarters there in a sign of Serbian willingness to implement the Dayton peace plan.

The Bosnian Serbs used the deployment of hundreds of United Nations soldiers on their territory in late May as a source for taking almost 400 hostages, North Atlantic Treaty Organization officers have said their heightened vigilance and their formidable firepower would prevent a repeat of that humiliating experience.

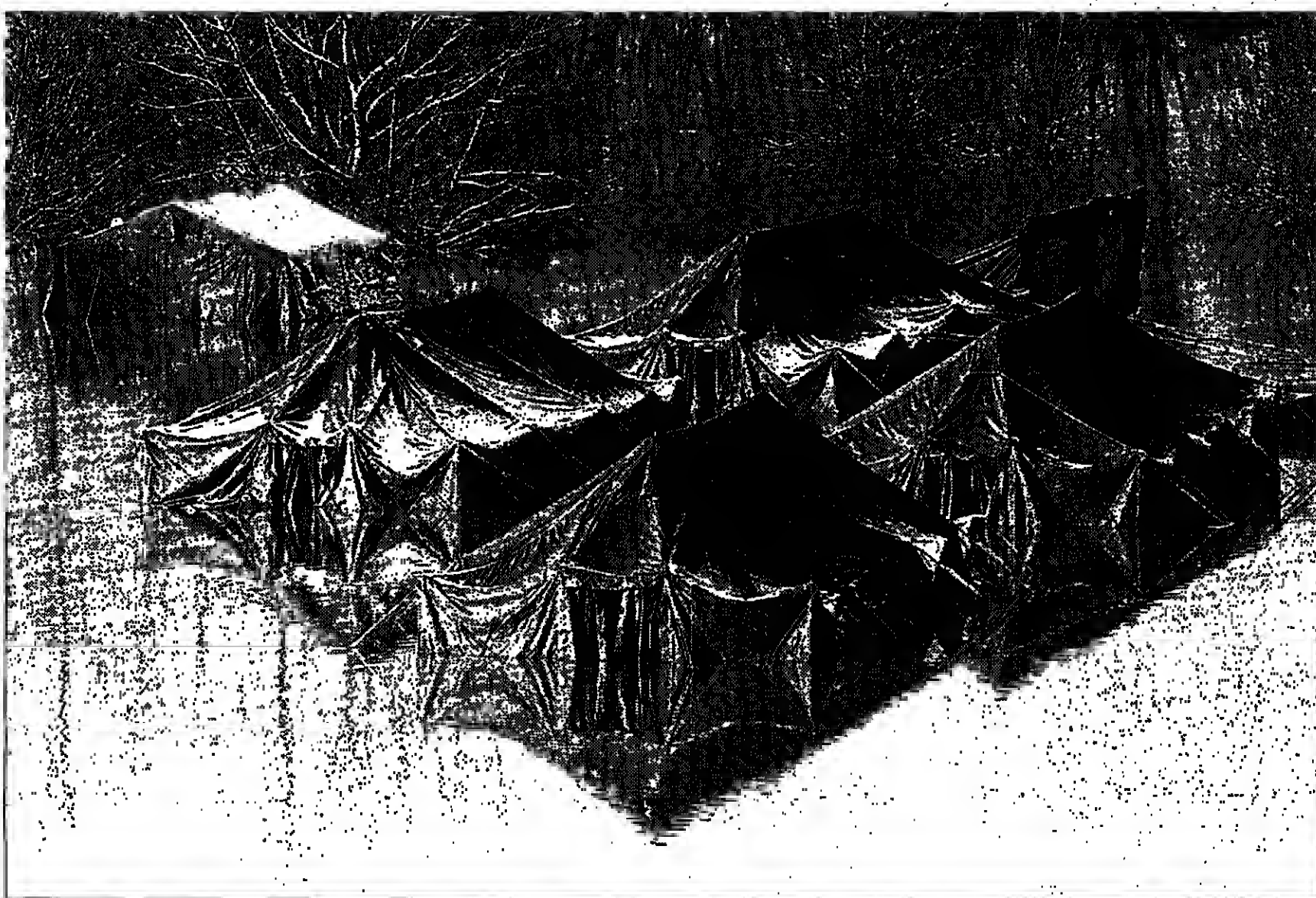
Admiral Smith said he believed the best location for the base would be Banja Luka's airport. Over the summer, the admiral, as commander of NATO's southern theater, recommended bombing the airfield because the Bosnian Serbs had resumed violating the no-flight zone that NATO was patrolling over Bosnia. Now, instead of destroying the airbase, Admiral Smith said his forces wanted to turn it into a headquarters for British troops in a marked indication of the changes happening in Bosnia over the last few weeks.

Admiral Smith was speaking in a wide-ranging interview with newspaper reporters on the day of the first major success of his operation to implement peace in Bosnia. His remarks constituted the clearest enunciation so far of the goals and terms of his historic peace mission.

Under the Dayton plan, Serbian and Muslim forces around Sarajevo had until midnight Wednesday to vacate 40 positions, including sniper's nests, trenches and bunkers, that had ringed Sarajevo for three and a half years. On Thursday, General Louis Zizler, commander of French NATO troops in Sarajevo, said that the warring factions had met the deadline.

"Today, in Sarajevo we can say that the first phase of the peace accord, signed in Paris on December 14, has been respected."

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A U.S. military camp sitting submerged Thursday after flooding near the Croatian town of Zupanja, where troops were building a pontoon bridge. Page 10

Richard Lugar: Brainy, Bland and Quite Far Behind

By Jerry Gray
New York Times Service

WASHINGTON — Consider the résumé: two-term mayor of Indianapolis; U.S. senator for nearly two decades; a Senate leader in the campaigns to rescue New York City and Chrysler Corp. from financial collapse; former chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; three times on the short list to be the running mate of the Republican presidential nominee.

By a number of measures, Senator Richard G. Lugar of Indiana is among the most qualified candidates ever to run for president of the United States.

"Everything a President Should Be," goes the slogan for his campaign. Everything but charismatic, that is.

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Despite his credentials, the brainy and statesmanlike Mr. Lugar remains virtually unknown outside his home state. Polite, wordy and bland, he also remains far back in the Republican presidential pack, badly trailing Senator Bob Dole of Kansas, Senator Phil Gramm of Texas and a host of other candidates who are tougher-talking, more glib and more telegenic.

"I suppose for the purposes of a campaign," Mr. Lugar, 63, conceded in an

interview the other day, "it might be more useful to get more of a thunderbolt quality."

That lack of flash is not the only thing working against the senator. His campaign is both underfunded and understaffed, and he started many months behind most other Republican candidates.

When he finally did make the formal announcement of his candidacy on April 19, it was all but drowned out by the Oklahoma City bombing that day.

Mr. Lugar has also bucked the times with his choice of a campaign theme. In a period when tax cuts, a balanced budget and less intrusive government are issues that resonate with the voters, he is stressing his foreign policy experience in the Senate, where he was chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee a decade ago, served

for much of the period since then as the committee's ranking Republican and is now second among its majority only to the current chairman, Jesse A. Helms of North Carolina.

His goal is to persuade the American people that their choice for president should be the candidate best able to lead the country in the post-Cold War era.

"Foreign affairs is not a strong suit for any of the rest of them," he said of the other candidates. "They would prefer to talk about taxes and spending and budgets. But the unique role for the president of the United States is commander in chief, the person most responsible for the security of the country."

Mr. Lugar has been a leader in fighting

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Thalidomide Is Back, but in a New Role

By Kimberly J. McLarin
New York Times Service

NEW YORK — Randy Warren never believed he would see the return of thalidomide, but the drug that caused him to be born without hips has quietly emerged from its disgrace.

The drug was banned throughout the world in the early 1960s, after a generation of babies was born with deformities because their mothers used it as a sedative or to reduce morning sickness. Still, it continued to be used, even to a limited extent in the United States, to treat leprosy.

Now, however, thalidomide is being tested widely against a range of diseases including tuberculosis and several AIDS-related illnesses, and scientists are exploring whether the drug inhibits the growth of HIV. At least two companies in the United States manufacture the drug with the blessing

of the Food and Drug Administration. But thalidomide's return has shaken those it deformed as babies, and left them struggling to reconcile a loathing of the drug with the possibility that it could help thousands of sick people.

Mr. Warren said he could not, in good conscience, advocate keeping thalidomide from anyone whose pain it might ease. Still, the thought of people taking the drug makes him cringe, even with new safeguards intended to prevent pregnancy.

"My first reaction was shock, anxiety, fear, abhorrence and concern for my mother," said Mr. Warren, of London, Ontario. "My second reaction was, 'Don't they ever learn?'"

Researchers and pharmaceutical company officials say thalidomide has the potential to increase the comfort of some sufferers and prolong lives. Groups working to fight AIDS say such a potent weapon

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Diabolical Fate for Faust's Bar

Capitalism Closes East German Watering Hole

By Stephen Kinzer
New York Times Service

LEIPZIG — Several centuries ago, according to Goethe, the devil brought Dr. Faust into a tradition-shrouded Leipzig drinking hall called Auerbach's Keller for a demonstration of his powers.

While rowdy students watched in amazement, he wove a spell that brought wine and champagne spilling from holes in a wooden table.

Astounded by the Devil's power, Faust agreed to make a fateful bargain with him, selling his soul in exchange for limitless knowledge.

Goethe's account of their transaction made Auerbach's Keller immortal, a pow-

erful magnet for tourists from around the world.

But recently, as a result of a more modern form of black magic, the doors of Auerbach's Keller were locked shut. The restaurant had survived nearly 500 years of wars, plagues and dictatorships, but the advent of capitalism in eastern Germany has proved too much for it.

Lawyers, bankers and court-appointed receivers are trying to negotiate a deal under which the beloved cellar can reopen, but so far they have been unsuccessful. Life-size statues of Faust and Mephisto, as Goethe called his Devil, still guard the stone steps leading down to its doors, but

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EXECUTION IN CHINA — Wang Jianye, a trade official convicted of embezzlement, being led to his execution Thursday in south China. Page 4.

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AGENDA

Clinton Vetoes Defense Funding

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton vetoed a \$265 billion defense authorization bill Thursday, objecting to its demands for costly weapons systems he said were unnecessary.

In his veto message, Mr. Clinton said he particularly objected to the attempt written into the bill by the Republican Congress to compel him to build and deploy a Star Wars-style missile defense system by 2003.

He said building such a missile defense system now would violate the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia and harm arms control efforts.

Indications are that Mr. Clinton's veto may be sustained by Congress. The Senate sent the fiscal 1996 defense authorization bill to the White House on a 51-43 vote. The House vote was 267 to 149. Neither equaled the two-thirds majority needed to override a veto.

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Dow Jones Down 10.12 5085.80	Trib Index Down 0.60% 131.84
The Dollar New York Times 1.4385	Previous Close 1.4395
Pound 1.5475	1.56
Yen 102.80	102.83
FF 4.921	4.8975

Newsstand Prices

Andorra.....10.00 FF	Morocco.....14 Dh
Antilles.....12.50 FF	Qatar.....10.00 Rials
Cambodia.....1.600 CFA	Réunion.....12.50 FF
France.....20 F	Saudi Arabia.....10.00 R
Gabon.....100 CFA	Senegal.....1.100 CFA
Greece.....350 Dr	Spain.....225 PTAS
Italy.....2.800 Lire	Tunisia.....1.250 Dn
Ivory Coast.....1.250 CFA	Turkey.....T.L. 60.000
Jordan.....1.250 JD	U.A.E.....10.00 Dirh
Lebanon.....US\$ 1.80	U.S. M. (Eur.).....\$1.20

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'Huge Thunder, Tiny Raindrops' / Trapped in Poverty in China's Interior

Deng's Economic Miracle Leaves Millions Behind

By Patrick E. Tyler
New York Times Service

DONGWANG, China — Chen Xianhe is not a revolutionary. He is just a down-on-his-luck peasant whose wife has run away to escape the poverty here and whose only cow fell off a cliff in May and died.

But Mr. Chen, 30, and many of his neighbors in this remote and desperately poor region of southwestern China speak a language of disaffection that is worrying China's Communist Party leaders.

No one is predicting a rebellion here, but it is hard for anyone, including the party bosses in Beijing, to understand where the limits of tolerance are for 1.2 billion Chinese.

Last year at this time, tens of thousands of peasants roared out of their villages and rioted in the cities of Kaili and Tongren in Guizhou Province, and army units were sent to restore order.

The grievances there were similar to the ones here: crushing tax burdens, brutish population control and a sense of hopelessness about escaping poverty, about feeding and schooling families, about living in something more than a reed house on a limestone hillside.

As China's economic miracle continues to leave millions behind, more Chinese are expressing anger over the economic disparities between the flourishing provinces of China's coastal plain and the impoverished inland, where 70 million to 80 million people cannot feed or clothe themselves and where hundreds of millions of others are only spectators to China's economic transformation.

On a recent morning, during a pause from stacking corn stalks, Mr. Chen easily unburdened the frustrations of his impoverishment to visitors, as many of his neighbors joined in.

"I am really angry," he said, squatting on a wooden stool in front of his dirt-floor hut. "This year, I wanted to get electricity for my hut, but I didn't have the money."

His neighbor Xie Qiaoying, 55, a grandmother, added, "Since Liberation, we haven't had a year in which we could completely feed ourselves," referring to the Communist victory over the Nationalists in 1949.

Last year, one woman in the village got pregnant even though she already had two children, the limit in this area. "The family planning authorities came and took her away," Mrs. Xie said, forcing the woman to agree to an abortion or lose the cow. When the women relented and submitted to the abortion, the government charged her half a year's income to get her cow back.

SUBMISSION is a strong tradition in China, but so is rebellion. When the riots hit Tongren, Communist Party officials blamed a handful of agitators who went from village to village to whip up anti-government sentiment.

Unofficial accounts said there had been "many deaths." Even the Communist Party newspaper in Guizhou seemed breathless in reporting that "illegal elements openly smashed vehicles, illegally took hostages and robbed public security cadres and police of their firearms, thus causing serious consequences" that "shocked the entire province."

But what is more shocking to many peasants are the tales of China's new millionaires exploiting the tax breaks, child labor and financial privileges created for the "special economic zones" in the coastal provinces.

These stories have outlived a deep resentment among an inland population that has been eagerly awaiting its turn under the economic reform policies of Deng Xiaoping.

With Mr. Deng infirm at 91, the very success of his reforms has revived the latest



Chen Xianhe sitting with his two daughters in their open-air hut in Dongwang.

passion of a long debate in China about egalitarianism. The debate pits the era of Mao with all of its Communist idealism of a level society — an idealism still very much alive across several generations of Chinese — against the reform era of Mr. Deng.

In the Deng era, the wonders of capitalism have recreated in China great inequalities, dislocations and the scourge of corruption and vice that many Chinese, whether they still believe in communism or not, deeply loathe. For 16 years, ever since Mr. Deng set China on the path of economic reform, hundreds of millions of peasants in the interior have suffered under his administration that some areas would have to get rich first while others persevered in poverty.

Millions of peasants in Mr. Deng's native Sichuan Province and in Yunnan, Guangxi and here in the Maolan region of Guizhou, about 100 miles south of the provincial capital, Guiyang, are among those who have been waiting. Now, many of them are suffering.

Mr. Chen is raising his two daughters by himself in an open-air hut where temperatures dip to freezing this time of year and make it even harder to haul water up the mountain on a pole, or get any sleep under a thin quilt after an unappetizing dinner of cornmeal gruel.

The local government has just taken the equivalent of two years' income from Mr.

Chen to bring electricity to his village, which for Mr. Chen means two 60-watt lightbulbs to illuminate the squalor of his life.

"I don't have much faith in anything," he said. "My misfortunes seem to overtake me alone. We don't have money to buy fertilizer. I don't have a cow or ox to cultivate the land and the soil is barren."

"My biggest wish," he added, "is that the government will change its policies and help us get rich, because living in this kind of poverty makes us too embarrassed to even go out of doors."

To a great extent, Communist Party leaders have tried to alleviate poverty, and they can claim a measure of success.

Since 1978, when Mr. Deng pushed through the first agricultural reforms, freeing the peasants to expand their private plots and markets, more than 170 million Chinese have climbed above the "absolute poverty" line of \$43 a year per capita.

But as the World Bank pointed out this year, "the quick reductions of poverty through agricultural growth" in China "were largely exhausted by the end of 1984."

"Most of the residual poor have remained trapped in more remote upland areas where agricultural productivity gains have proven far more problematic," the bank's agricultural division said in report issued in May.

Reducing poverty further will require a much greater commitment from the government, which has mobilized many small-scale antipoverty projects with the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program and numerous charities. But the main task of reducing poverty remains largely unaddressed.

Using a Chinese expression, a Communist Party official in Guizhou said that when the government talks about investing new financial resources in central and western China, "the thunder is huge, but the raindrops are tiny."

"I don't expect a lot from the central government, because they don't have a lot of money," said the official, who has worked in Guizhou's party bureaucracy for 30 years.

Even within Guizhou Province, the disparities are significant. The provincial capital, Guiyang, glitters at night under the lights of new hotels, restaurants and karaoke bars whose driveways are choked with the Cadillacs and BMWs of top government and police officials.

Corruption is widespread. The provincial chief of public security and the wife of the ex-governor were sentenced to death this year.

THE governor's wife, Yan Jianhong, was executed on Jan. 16 after she was convicted of embezzling hundreds of thousands of dollars in public funds to build a private restaurant, massage parlor and spa for the thin upper crust of moneyed entrepreneurs and their party patrons who run this province.

Three weeks after the riots in Tongren, she was paraded through the streets of Guiyang, standing shackled in the bed of a truck, which drove her to the execution grounds. There, she was told to kneel to receive her executioner's bullet at a downward angle through the back of her head.

"I haven't knelt since Liberation," she said defiantly, before being forced to her knees and shot.

Within the Chinese Communist Party, some economic reformers fear that the strong emotional pull of egalitarianism is being exploited by party ideologues and other opportunists to undermine Mr. Deng's reforms and his protégés in the government. But others disagree.

"If Deng Xiaoping knew the disparities were as big as they are, he would be more militant than I am in trying to eliminate them," said Hu Angang, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing. "Every country has regional differences, but in China the regional differences are getting bigger, not smaller."

Mr. Hu, 42, has become, if not the most influential, at least the most vocal of Communist Party intellectuals sounding the warning that the inequalities in China's reform program are breeding rebellion.

"In America," he warned, "the deep differences between the North and South more than 100 years ago led to the Civil War."

He insisted that he, and many like-minded party apparatchiks, were not seeking to undermine China's coastal engines of economic growth. "But since the coastal areas can now sustain their development and get rich, I don't think it is unreasonable to shift the focus to the underdeveloped areas," he said, "if only from the point of view of justice and equality."

President Jiang Zemin and other top leaders are apparently heeding the warnings of some provincial leaders that rising crime, rebellion and warlordism will be the consequence of not addressing the huge disparities.

But in the interior, the peasants continue to wait. Mr. Hu, who toured Guizhou this year, said, "It will be a long and hard struggle to bring those people out of their backward state, as long and as arduous a struggle as the Civil War in the United States."

Russia Staggered By Flu Epidemic
Millions Are Stricken; Ukraine Also Hard-HitBy Michael Specter
New York Times Service

MOSCOW — The most severe flu epidemic in decades is sweeping Russia and Ukraine, with as many as 200,000 people falling ill each day, according to health officials in Moscow.

Nearly 1 million people have been infected in Moscow alone, and it is nearly impossible to find a family that has been spared. In Ukraine, at least 2 million people have already gotten sick, and health officials there said the number could triple in the next two weeks.

So far, only a few deaths have been officially reported — five in Ukraine, three in Russia — but the experience of past flu epidemics makes it likely that the number of fatalities is much higher than reported.

Doctors here also say that respiratory complications from the illness can persist for weeks.

Many schools in both countries have been shut, hospitals are under quarantine and government officials have warned that every streetcar, subway and bus has become the perfect vessel for transmitting the virus.

"We were getting as many as 50,000 new cases a day in Moscow alone the past two weeks," said Galina F. Lavikova, chief of the department of infectious disease for the Russian Ministry of Health. "We thought it was going to get even worse but we may be seeing the peak here."

In both countries, officials were quick to point out that the flu virus, while unusually virulent this year, was not the only reason for the rapid spread of the epidemic.

The health systems of virtually all former republics of the Soviet Union have fared badly in the past several years. The Russian budget, for example, provides only a small fraction of the funds for preventive medicine that it once allocated. Poverty is more apparent than ever, particularly in big cities, where viruses spread most easily.

"Social changes and the deterioration of living conditions have lowered the general resistance of the nation," Yuri Solodovnikov, a researcher at

Moscow's epidemiological center, told the newspaper Moscow News. "Viruses that used to pass by almost unnoticed now provoke serious epidemics."

There are flu vaccines here, but they are not given uniformly, rarely advertised and still subject to the widespread belief that the shot may be worse than the illness.

Children have been the biggest victims of the epidemic, falling ill nearly six times as frequently as adults.

Most doctors advise rest and isolation. Some are more aggressive than others. Officials in Kursk, not far from the Ukrainian border in southern Russia, have banned all public meetings because at least 2,000 people a day are falling ill there.

In Chelyabinsk, also in southern Russia, calls for ambulances have been five to seven times higher than normal in the last two weeks.

In Moscow, the demand for medical services has increased greatly during the month, as it has in St. Petersburg.

It is now almost impossible to count on an ambulance arriving within an hour in Moscow, partly because the volume of calls have placed them almost constantly in use.

In many cases, visits by relatives to hospital patients have been canceled and the delivery of food parcels prohibited. Moscow is a city of huge flea markets, and they can draw thousands of shoppers who can quickly spread the virus.

The most dangerous places are the most popular places, said Mrs. Lavikova. "The more people you are with, the more likely you are to get sick."

Identical Strains

An influenza expert at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control said the flu strains circulating in Russia appear to be identical to those currently in Western Europe and the United States. These include all three strains selected for inclusion in this year's influenza vaccine.

The World Health Organization decides which strains to include in the vaccine on the basis of worldwide reports indicating which viruses pose the greatest threat. (HT)

TRAVEL UPDATE

Louvre Sets Free Sunday Admissions

PARIS (AFP) — France's premier museum, the Louvre, will be free to visitors on the first Sunday of each month in 1996, the authorities announced here Thursday.

Culture Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy had said earlier that he wanted to make the huge museum more accessible to the wider public. Entry to the Louvre had been free on Sundays until six years ago, when a reduced fee compared with the normal weekday price was introduced.

Groups will not be allowed in on free Sundays to avoid overcrowding, and the admissions program will be evaluated over two years.

UAL and Delta Trim Winter Fares

CHICAGO (Reuters) — United Airlines joined in a winter fare sale Thursday, saying it would match reduced-price fares offered by Delta Air Lines. "We are matching Delta in competitive markets," said Joe Hopkins, a UAL spokesman.

Delta earlier offered 30 percent to 50 percent off regular advanced purchase fares for travel in the United States, Canada and Mexico. The special fares require at least a seven-day advance purchase and a stay over a Saturday night. Tickets are for travel from Jan. 2 through Feb. 29, and must be purchased no later than Jan. 10, Delta said.

A walkout by Icelandic air-traffic controllers loomed after the breakdown of pay talks on Thursday, but civil aviation authorities in Reykjavik vowed there would be no disruption of trans-Atlantic air travel. All 82 Icelandic air traffic controllers have submitted their resignations, threatening to stop work at the end of the year, but the authorities have used a legal provision to extend the contracts of 32 of them for three months. (Reuters)

At least 99 people died of frostbite over the last week and many more are missing after blizzards in northern Kazakhstan, the State Emergency Committee said Thursday. (Reuters)

In a crackdown in Greece, the Supreme Court has asked public prosecutors to file felony murder charges against any driver who kills someone while driving drunk or in a knowingly reckless fashion. (AP)

Sob Story Turns Out to Be a Christmas Scam

The Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — The 12-year-old boy's story touched hearts nationwide: He had been abandoned at a bus stop days before Christmas and his birthday.

It turns out, however, that the boy was actually a 25-year-old woman who has pulled similar scams in several other states, trying to get sympathy, places to stay and free services.

Birdie Jo Hoaks has been jailed in at least two states for the same kind of ploy.

Utah officials were already suspicious about the tale of abandonment after Ms. Hoaks refused to undergo a medical exam. They discovered her true identity Wednesday after the authorities in Vermont contacted them about a similar case.

When confronted, Ms. Hoaks confessed to making up the story, said Sergeant Jim Vaughn of the Salt Lake County sheriff's office.

She was arrested and faces charges of making false statements to a judge and theft of

services. She could be sentenced to up to 15 years in prison if convicted.

Ms. Hoaks (pronounced hoaks, coincidentally) called Utah social services officials on Dec. 20. She told a social worker that she had been left at a bus stop by her stepmother and father.

She provided a birth certificate that said she was Michael Ross, who would celebrate his 13th birthday on Christmas Day.

She gave the authorities a letter supposedly written by the stepmother that said she could no longer care for the boy because his father had AIDS and his birth mother was dead.

While still posing as a boy, Ms. Hoaks told officials that she had never been to school, and that her family lived a nomadic life, finding shelter where they could. She was placed in a group home.

By Christmas, officials had received calls from more than 50 people offering donations, gifts and even their homes. The state and a local newspaper set up trust funds.

"I'm just glad frankly that it unraveled as quickly as it did," said Mary Noonan, director of the Division of Family Services. The office said any donations would be returned.

Vermont officials contacted Utah and provided a photograph of Ms. Hoaks. She had been arrested in Vermont in 1993 for a similar scam and sentenced to 23 days in jail.

In April, Ms. Hoaks told officials in Rapid City, South Dakota, that she was 13-year-old Nathan Devine, and that he had been abandoned by his mother who could no longer care for him.

She received about \$728 in cash and benefits before work-

ers at a youth home became suspicious and called the police.

Ms. Hoaks served seven months of a nine-month sentence for welfare fraud before being released from a South Dakota jail on Oct. 11.

In 1993, as a 22-year-old, Ms. Hoaks convinced the police in Bennington, Vermont, that she was a 12-year-old Arkansas boy who had been abandoned in Maine. Two days later, her true identity was discovered during a physical exam.

In 1992, she stayed at a boys' home in Wichita, Kansas, for six weeks and received free food, clothing and Christmas presents. Her ploy was discovered when doctors found a Cesarean section scar. She was not charged.

Cases involving Ms. Hoaks have been reported in Alaska, Idaho, Maine, Montana, New Jersey, New York, Texas and West Virginia.

2 Men Charged With Planting Bomb in Reno

The Associated Press

RENO, Nevada — Two men have been arrested on charges of planting a bomb at the Internal Revenue Service building here earlier this month, federal agents said Thursday. The bomb did not go off.

Ellis Edward Hurst, 52, and Joseph Martin Baile, 40, were arrested in the Gardnerville area, where both men lived.

A statement from the investigating agencies gave no motive for the attempted bombing. The men were charged with attempted destruction of a government building and the use of a destructive device in relation to a crime of violence.

The bomb, a 30-gallon plastic drum, was found Dec. 18 in a parking lot by an employee. It reportedly was packed with ammonium nitrate and fuel oil.

Benny's New York Bar
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THE AMERICAS

With the Cold War Over, Canada Spies on Its Allies, Former Aides Say

By Clyde H. Farnsworth
New York Times Service

OTTAWA — It looks like any other nondescript government building, in a city full of them, until you notice that the high fence surrounding it is topped with barbed wire and there is only one way to get in — through what looks like a guardhouse.

The four-story Sir Leonard Tilley Building, named after an obscure 19th-century Canadian finance minister, houses Canada's most secretive intelligence agency, the Communications Security Establishment.

The agency, the branch of the defense department that gathers signal intelligence, used to attract little public notice. But now, after much unwanted publicity from disgruntled former employees who accuse it of spying on Canadian citizens and Canada's allies, the agency finds itself the focal point of debate about intelligence-gathering in Canadian society.

Jane Shorten, 38, worked for the agency as an intelligence analyst from 1986 to 1994, when she was laid off in a belt-tightening move. Recently she touched off minor international incidents after disclos-

ing in a television interview that Canada had spied on friendly countries such as South Korea and Mexico.

One of the projects she was involved in gathered economic, military and security intelligence on South Korea. With high-powered electronic listening devices she eavesdropped on secret discussions among South Korean officials about purchasing nuclear reactors.

"Anything having to do with the South Korean diplomatic corps was of interest," she told the CTV television network.

She also monitored communications

from the Mexican Embassy during the negotiations that led to the North American Free Trade Agreement among Canada, Mexico and the United States.

The Mexican government presented a diplomatic note to Canada expressing "surprise and concern." The South Korean Foreign Ministry said it would take "appropriate measures" after an investigation.

Although the Soviet Union and its allies were once the prime targets of surveillance, after the Cold War the Communications Security Establishment has shifted its at-

tention to economic espionage in friendly countries, Ms. Shorten said.

Ottawa says it will look into the new allegations. After reports this year that the CIA had spied on the Japanese delegation during auto trade talks, Solicitor General Herbert Gray was asked whether Canada carried out similar operations.

"Countries like Canada have understandings that they don't carry out these activities against each other," he told Parliament in October.

Interception of private communications in Canada is illegal. The agency says it

targets only foreign communications, but a gray area apparently exists with Canadians working for foreign embassies. Ms. Shorten expressed dismay at having to make the government's business to eavesdrop on one Canadian employee of a foreign embassy in discussions with her gynecologist.

Deputy Prime Minister Sheila Copps promised an official review of the Shorten allegation, adding, "If, in fact, there has been illegal activity going on, we'll want to deal with that in as public a way as possible."

CIA Chief Faces Test Over Reach Of Spy Arm

By Walter Pincus
Washington Post Service

WASHINGTON — John M. Deutch, director of the CIA, faces a major disciplinary decision next month that could provide an important test of the influence of the agency's clandestine Directorate of Operations, the powerful intelligence arm that has become a target for critics of the agency.

The subject of Mr. Deutch's decision is the fate of the agency's chief of station in Paris, a respected veteran officer whose record includes heroism and a disfiguring injury in Africa during the 1970s.

The station chief, whose name is classified, has accepted personal responsibility for "subordinates' errors that led to French counterintelligence uncovering a CIA economic espionage operation in 1993.

The issue for Mr. Deutch is the power and influence of the directorate, members of which have rallied behind the station chief in an effort to save his job.

The directorate has come under fire for missteps and mistakes since the fall of the Berlin Wall changed the face of American espionage, mistakes symbolized by Aldrich H. Ames, who betrayed agents to the Soviet Union for years.

Although Mr. Deutch has been moving ahead on a series of major reforms in the technical intelligence areas of spy satellites and analysis, he has been less effective in bringing order to the smaller, but more complex field of human intelligence.

The French affair became a public scandal last February, when, in the midst of France's presidential campaign, Interior Minister Charles Pasqua asked the United States to recall four CIA officers associated with the U.S. Embassy in Paris and a female American agent.

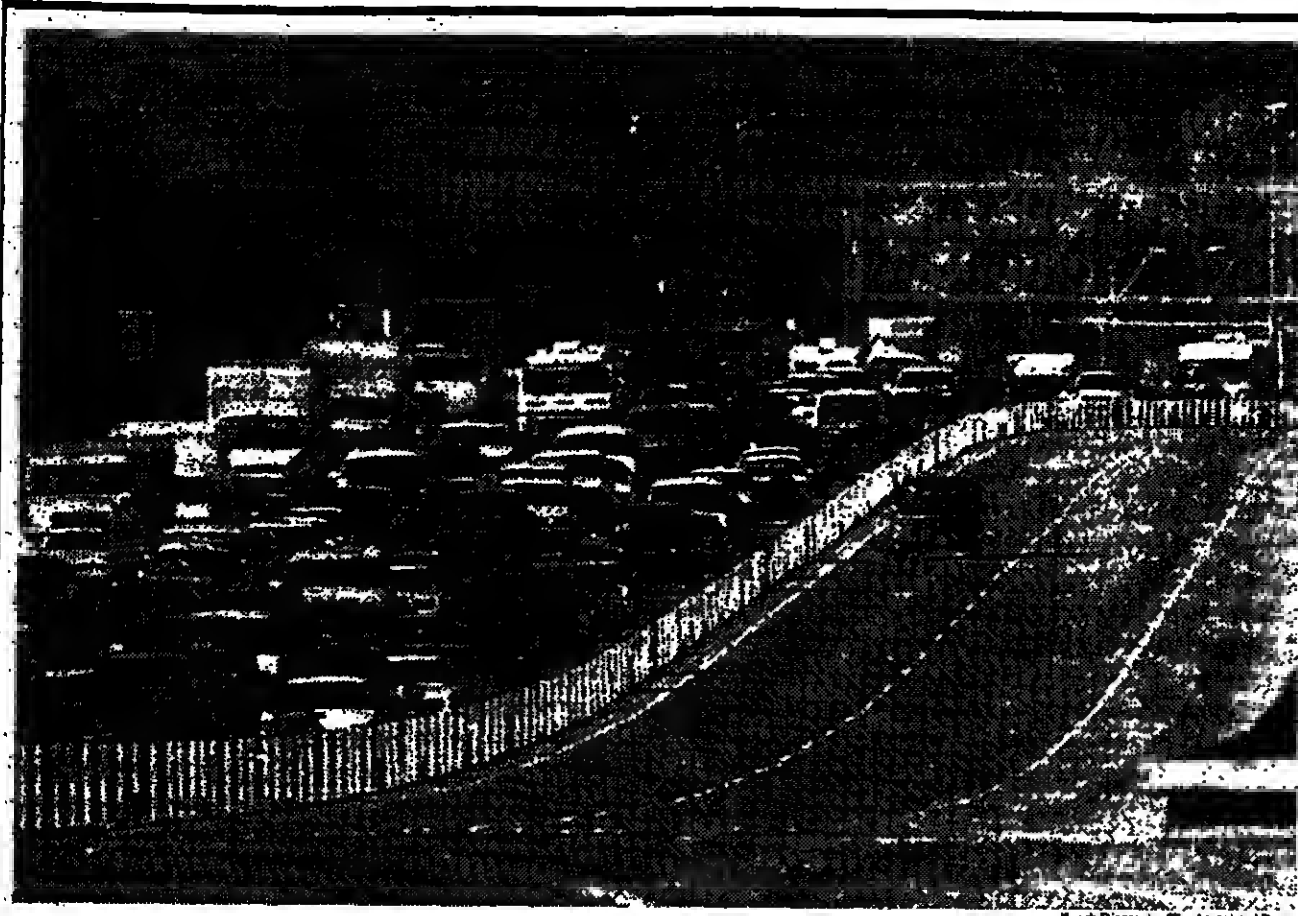
Two weeks ago, sources said, when it appeared that a critical CIA inspector-general report might lead Mr. Deutch to force the Paris station chief to resign before his expected retirement date, a few current and former senior operations officers took the unusual step of informing the director that such an action would cause a major outcry in the directorate.

"If he is given the ax it will be pretty shameful," one officer said.

Senior espionage officers said the decision is a test of Mr. Deutch's remarks to Congress last week that "it's time to stop criticism of the past few years" of the agency.

"Deutch has been saying one thing on the Hill and another at headquarters," a former CIA official said.

"Everyone's watching him on this one to see if he's finally decided to stop playing both ends against the middle."



A TOLL ROAD THAT RUNS ITSELF — A highway construction truck traveling the world's first fully automated toll road before it was opened in Anaheim, California. Motorists do not stop to pay tolls, but are debited later. Transponders in their vehicles allow for tracking the use of the 10-mile stretch alongside state Highway 91.

Federal Employees Angered Over Prospect of Partial Pay

By Stephen Barr
Washington Post Service

WASHINGTON — Jolted by the prospect of only partial pay at the end of the month, federal employees are lashing out at their agencies and lawmakers while worrying that they will not be able to make home mortgage and car payments on time.

Doris Johnson, a 29-year Labor Department employee on furlough at home in nearby Greenbelt, Maryland, called the prospect of partial pay "ridiculous" and faulted members of Congress for the budget impasse.

"They are getting a full paycheck," she said. "They are playing games with people." On Capitol Hill, meantime, budget talks aimed at ending the partial government shutdown and resolving the wide political and policy differences between President Bill Clinton and the Republican-controlled Congress over the federal bud-

get were off to a slow start. Aides to Republican leaders and staff members from the Office of Management and Budget have discussed how negotiations could be structured so that they would lead to a Friday afternoon meeting between the president and congressional leaders.

The president met briefly with budget director Alice M. Rivlin, but Mr. Clinton's other top budget negotiator, the White House chief of staff, Leon E. Panetta, was not due back from vacation until late Thursday.

"Why are these guys in Congress getting paid? These people should be held accountable," said George Souk of Rockville, Maryland, a 19-year Immigration and Naturalization Service employee on furlough. "If I'm not getting paid, these people shouldn't be getting paid. It doesn't make any sense."

The shutdown, by far the

government's longest as it headed toward the two-week mark, has slowed or halted activities at nine cabinet departments and 38 agencies, commissions and boards. About 280,000 federal employees are on furlough and 480,000 have been kept at work at the unfunded departments to provide emergency or critical services.

Although no count has been taken, budget office officials estimate that 200,000 to 250,000 private-sector contract employees — such as computer technicians and building guards — work for companies that will not receive contract payments or will have the contracts stopped. Last year, the agencies now closed spent about \$15 billion on service contracts, according to the budget office.

The shutdown seems likely to spill over into next month. The worry about half-full paychecks increased this week when Clinton administration officials said it seemed virtually certain that the 760,000 employees caught in the shutdown would start the New Year with half a paycheck.

The warning appeared to catch a number of employees by surprise, particularly at the Justice Department, which is operating without a fiscal 1996 appropriation but has kept almost all FBI agents, Drug Enforcement Administration investigators and federal prison guards on duty. Justice Department employees complained that they were not notified until about 4 P.M. Tuesday that they would receive pay only for the time they worked before the shutdown began Dec. 16.

"They are furious about this," said Victor Oboyski, president of the 11,000-member Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association. "We have a lot of agents that have their mortgages taken right out of their paychecks. That one week of pay isn't going to cut it for car payments, mortgages and ex-wives."

POLITICAL NOTES

Safety First, or Noise Prevention?

CHICAGO — It is a classic case of public safety concerns colliding with fears of noise pollution.

Officials in northeastern Illinois, the nation's rail hub, fear that a new federal law set to take effect in November will pierce the tranquility of their communities with the blare of whistles, day and night, from the hundreds of locomotives that cross the region.

A noise law, of the law, enacted in 1994, orders the Federal Railroad Administration to require trains to sound their horns at every public road-rail crossing in the country, 24 hours a day. In October, seven high school students in a Chicago suburb were killed when their school bus was struck by a commuter express. But earlier this month an organization that represents 268 municipalities in northeastern Illinois voted to ask the rail agency to delay the law and allow for exemptions where accident rates are low.

(WP)

Along the Medicare Battlefront

WASHINGTON — President Bill Clinton blasts the Republicans on Medicare, claiming their proposed cuts in spending growth are so steep that they will cripple the program and make it impossible to deliver decent health care to the 37 million elderly and disabled Americans who depend on it.

For their part, Republicans are having a field day with TV ads showing Hillary Rodham Clinton, in 1993, defending the Medicare provisions of the Clinton administration's now-defunct national health reform plan. In the clip, she says her plan would not cut Medicare but is merely "beginning to reduce the rate of increase." She says it would move from about 11 percent annually "to about 6 or 7 percent."

Then, the Republican announcer chimes in triumphantly that the current Republican plan actually would allow a higher rate of Medicare growth than the 1993-94 Clinton plan. It would "increase Medicare spending 7.2 percent, more than Mrs. Clinton's proposal."

The basic problem is this: Medicare, which will cost the government about \$200 billion next year, is growing at 10 percent or more annually.

The idea on both sides is to slow the rate of growth, and both sides have used much the same methods. The question remains: how deeply and how fast?

(WP)

Quote/Unquote

Senator Bob Dole, acknowledging the time pressures he faces as the budget battle in Washington intensifies with his campaign for the presidential nomination: "I thought certainly we'd be finished by Christmas. But you play the hand you're dealt."

(AP)

U.S. Targets World Traffic in Migrants

By William Branigin
Washington Post Service

WASHINGTON — In a report to President Bill Clinton, an interagency working group on the smuggling of illegal aliens to the United States has painted a grim picture of what it calls a "growing trade in human cargo" and recommended a more aggressive global effort to combat it.

The report, after a nine-month study by officials of the State and Justice departments, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Coast Guard, CIA and FBI, describes widespread official corruption and lax law enforcement in several countries as facilitating the flow of hundreds of thousands of people through lucrative smuggling pipelines that often lead to the United States. A copy of the report, sent to the president last month, was obtained by The Washington Post.

"Viewed globally, trafficking in illegal migrants is an enormous problem," the study says. "This growing trade in human cargo earns smugglers billions of dollars in annual profits" and is "made possible by staggering levels of official corruption."

Since alien-smuggling is a crime in only a few countries and penalties tend to be minimal, many trafficking organizations "operate with near impunity," the report says. In addition to being suborned by smugglers, it adds, authorities in some countries are reluctant to fight what they view it as a "victimless crime."

U.S. officials express hope that such views may be changing as "transit countries" grow increasingly concerned about the corrosive effects of corruption, criminality by illegal migrants and the tendency of many people in the pipeline to settle along the way.

In a case that exemplified this concern and signaled closer cooperation among the United States and Latin American countries, authorities in Ecuador, Honduras and Costa Rica this month acted on U.S. agents to break up a major alien-smuggling ring allegedly headed by Gloria Canales, a naturalized Costa Rican originally from Peru.

"In order for transnational criminals to be successful in moving aliens halfway around the world, they have to build networks," said Jonathan Winer, deputy assistant secretary of state for international narcotics and law enforcement affairs. "It's absolutely critical that governments do the same thing."

Building networks of diplomacy and law enforcement, he said, "is the core of the strategy that President Clinton has signed off on and instructed us to carry out." He added that the White House recognized that "this is becoming a national security problem, not just an immigration problem."

Although Congress has turned down Immigration and Naturalization Service requests to fund more "overseas deterrence" initiatives, the agency plans to "shift some resources internally" to add about 15 more agents to offices abroad, the INS commissioner, Doris M. Meissner, said. She added that other efforts include greater information sharing with foreign governments and more diplomatic pressure on host countries "in particular cases."

Of significant concern lately has been the growth of Europe as "a major gateway to the United States for illegal migration and alien-smuggling," in part because of reduction of border controls and collapse of authority in the former communist states, the report says. Up to 500,000 illegal aliens enter Western Europe each year, with a similar number waiting in Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, and many "will eventually attempt to illegally enter the United States."

"Moscow has emerged as a major transit hub with an estimated 200,000 illegal aliens in temporary residence at any time," the report says. Among them are an estimated 60,000 Chinese and up to 40,000 South Asians, mainly Indians, most of them awaiting passage to the United States via Latin America and Europe, the study says. All seven countries of Central America have been used to funnel people to the United States, often through Mexico.

The annual traffic includes an estimated 100,000 people from outside the region and 200,000 to 300,000 Central Americans, the report says. Guatemala, in particular, has become a regional center.

Similarly, the Caribbean has developed into a major source of illegal migrants, with the Dominican Republic as "the key problem country." In China, where alien-smuggling has become highly organized, trafficking gangs move up to 50,000 people a year to the United States at fees of up to \$35,000 each, the study says. Most arrive by commercial aircraft in small groups with fraudulent documents. Thousands of others are smuggled aboard ships, the report says.

Shutdown Shuts Up Galileo Scientists

By Robert Lee Hotz
Los Angeles Times Service

LOS ANGELES — NASA scientists invested their hopes, fears, almost 20 years and more than \$1.3 billion to ouge their Galileo mission all the way to Jupiter. But now — weeks after the probe completed its fiery swoosh dive into the planet's swirling atmosphere — they cannot tell the public that funded the mission what they have discovered there.

Until the U.S. government resumes its normal operations once the budget crisis is resolved, the scientists are not allowed to make their findings public. Scientists were to present their preliminary findings at a Dec. 19 news conference, but failure to agree on a federal budget forced the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to cancel it because there was no money for such nonessentials as television lights, satellite hookups, media kits and public relations personnel.

A scientist with data he cannot share is like a child with a present he cannot open. At the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the California Institute of Technology, both in Pasadena, and the Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California, planetary scientists are squirming with impatience, unable to unveil what one called "57 minutes of unique, glorious data."

"It is certainly frustrating for the scientists who have waited so long," said Torrence V. Johnson, a Galileo project scientist who was among those who first proposed the mission 20 years ago.

In recent weeks, the Galileo project scientists have been analyzing the first, comprehensive look into the turbulent atmosphere of the solar system's largest planet — learned back by the probe Dec. 7.

The need to keep silent is especially painful for researchers who have spent their entire careers on the project. It is an unusual situation for the space agency as well, which is formally required to inform the public about its space activities as part of its charter.

In the meantime, the scientists are swapping data on the Internet and preparing formal research papers for peer-reviewed publication in coming months.

Earlier this week, NASA mission engineers successfully re-established contact with the main Galileo orbiter, from which the 757-pound (344-kilogram) atmosphere probe was launched, as it emerged from behind the sun.

"The most important thing to realize is, as with other essential services, the Galileo mission is safe," Mr. Johnson said. "The data is being collected. The critical people are all ensuring the mission is working."

Not counting prison inmates, more than 90 percent of the illegal immigrants who are sent back are halted at the border.

And, some anti-immigration groups say, with an estimated 4 million illegal aliens currently in the country and a 200,000 annual net increase in that number, the removal of 51,600 persons is more symbolic than significant.

"It's nice that they're making a priority of removing criminal aliens, but the bottom line is most illegal aliens don't go home," said Dan Stein, executive director of the Federation of American Immigration Reform, a group that wants to cut both legal and illegal immigration. "The chances of being apprehended and deported, once you get past the border patrol is less than 1 percent."

Still, officials of some pro- and anti-immigration groups say the increase in removals is a significant change of focus for the INS.

Away From Politics

• The San Francisco police chief, Anthony Ribera, has been cleared of accusations that he sexually harassed a former police officer who was once his chief spokeswoman. But a federal jury found that the city had discriminated against Joanne Welsh by replacing her as department spokeswoman and failing to pay her for two weeks of work. The jury awarded her \$56,835.

• A 23-year-old man survived an attempted suicide plunge of 220 feet off the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, landing just yards from a psychiatrist who happened to be out in a rowboat with a cellular phone. Dennis Tison tossed the man his life jacket and used a phone to call the police. Coast Guard officials arrived within minutes and pulled the man out of the water. He was in serious but stable condition with back injuries.

• A 94-year-old woman who lived in a rundown house despite having a \$4.4 million stock portfolio willed most of her fortune to Gallaudet University, a school for the deaf in Washington. Nobody seems to know where Olive Swindels got the money to buy stocks or the real estate she also owned, and Gallaudet had never heard of her.

• The widow of a pedestrian who was struck and killed by a car just before Christmas last

year is suing the town of Old Saybrook, Connecticut, saying its Christmas lights along Main Street made it difficult for drivers to see. The widow, Evelyn Delaney, is seeking unspecified damages. A police lieutenant, Richard Nigossian, said he had heard no other complaints about the decorations over the past 23 years.

• A skydiver who could not open his parachute plunged 3,000 feet into a snowy field and survived. Bruce Charles's backup parachute partly opened just before he hit the ground near Allentown, Pennsylvania. He was in guarded condition with injuries to his legs, hips and back.

• The world's population grew this year by 100 million people, to 5.75 billion, the largest increase ever, according to the Washington-based Population Institute. Ninety percent of the growth is in poor countries "already terribly torn by civil strife and social unrest and where all too many people live in brutal poverty," said Werner Fornos, an official of the institute.

• Only about two dozen of the 12 million pints of blood used in transfusions each year in the United States are infected with the AIDS virus, researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have found. The finding, about half previous estimates, was based on a review of 9 million donations in 1992 and 1993.

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ASIA

Beijing Confirms Hong Kong Panel

Lineup Draws Criticism, But Colony Pledges Help

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

HONG KONG — China's Parliament on Thursday endorsed a panel to set up Hong Kong's first government under Chinese rule, and the colony's existing government stressed that it would work with the body in the period before the handover in July 1997.

The list approved by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress included 94 members from Hong Kong and 56 Chinese officials, Chinese sources said. The list pointedly excluded the colony's Democratic Party, A.I. so absent were representatives of the British colony's weakening colonial business and administrative elite.

The list of the 150 Preparatory Committee members brought sharp criticism from the Democratic Party's leader, Martin Lee.

"I have to think China intends to have these members work with them cooperatively," he said. "In other words, giving them no problem at all. And to the Chinese government, I'm afraid, any disagreement represents a problem."

But the Hong Kong govern-

ment promised to work with the new body.

"The Preparatory Committee" it said in a statement, "will play an important role in the establishment of the special administrative region's government. It is therefore in Hong Kong's interest that we should cooperate with it."

Among the members from Hong Kong are 11 politicians, 34 business people, 33 professionals and academics and 16 representatives from the religious, social work and rural communities, China's Xinhua news agency said.

Hong Kong businessmen on the list included Li Ka-shing, chairman of Cheung Kong (Holdings) Ltd.; Tung Chee-hwa, chairman of Orient Overseas International; Sir Run Run Shaw, chairman of Television Broadcasts Ltd.; Louis Cha, former chairman of Ming Pao Enterprises and, Tsui Tsin-tong, executive chairman of the CNT group.

A spokesman for a Hong Kong group monitoring the appointments singled out the businessmen, saying, "The so-called representatives were mostly businessmen who fol-



BAD NEWS — A protester in Hong Kong weeping on Thursday after learning that Wei Jingsheng, one of China's most prominent pro-democracy dissidents, had lost a court appeal in Beijing to overturn his 14-year prison sentence.

low the line of the Chinese government."

David Chu, a Hong Kong businessman and legislator who was among those selected by Beijing, defended China's decision not to include the Democratic Party.

"We have to understand the reality that the Chinese government appoints only those who they think can work with China," Mr. Chu said. "China has to consider its own interest."

The committee will be led by

Foreign Minister Qian Qichen of China, who is the former director of China's study group on Hong Kong, the Preliminary Working Committee, which was dissolved last month to make way for the new group.

Lu Ping, director of the Chinese state council's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Department, was chosen as general secretary.

The committee will be officially installed in January. Among its tasks will be the set-

ting up of a new Hong Kong government, including the formation of a provisional legislature until elections can be held.

China has vowed to dismantle Hong Kong's democratic elected legislature after it takes power. Governor Chris Patten has irritated Beijing by pushing through democratic reforms.

Though the committee's emphasis on influential businessmen was no surprise, the move

threatens to further unsettle Hong Kong's 6 million people, many of whom are already wary of Beijing, analysts said.

Frederick Fung, one of 14 Hong Kong legislators appointed to the Preparatory Committee, said that "1996 will be the year of arguing."

"I'm afraid people from the business side will not know the values, ideals and life of ordinary people," he said. "That will create conflict and confrontation." (AP, AP)

France Shrugs Off New Wave of Protest On 5th Nuclear Test

Agence France-Press

PARIS — France shrugged off on Thursday a new outburst of world outrage provoked by its fifth nuclear test in the South Pacific, saying it was nearing an end to the series of blasts.

As Paris's European allies again joined countries like Australia, New Zealand and Japan in condemning the tests, French officials reiterated that the tests were scheduled to be completed by the end of February.

"We are approaching the end of the campaign," said a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, Yves Douriaux, after the 30 kiloton blast Wednesday night on the Mururoa Atoll test site.

"France has already indicated that once this series of tests is over we will sign the comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty, which is being negotiated in Geneva and in which we are playing a decisive role," he said.

The test at 2130 GMT Wednesday was announced in a terse Defense Ministry statement reiterating that it was aimed at developing simulation techniques for future laboratory tests. With a power equal to less than 30,000 tons of TNT, it was one of the smallest since the blasts were resumed in September, ending a moratorium announced in 1992 by President François Mitterrand.

Mr. Mitterrand's successor, Jacques Chirac, who took power in May, has refused to bow to international pressure, including a recent United Nations resolution, to stop the tests. China is the only other country that is continuing to carry out nuclear weapons tests.

Mr. Chirac has pledged to end the tests ahead of their original schedule, but it is unclear whether the blasts will number six or seven in total.

"It will depend on the results obtained from the tests already carried out," Mr. Douriaux said Thursday. "A decision will be made in due course."

Protests about the latest blast were swift, with French ambassadors being summoned in a number of capitals.

In Sydney, acting Prime

Minister Kim Beazley described the action as reckless and arrogant. "I call on the French government to make a fresh start to 1996 by immediately ending its nuclear weapons tests," he said.

In Washington, a U.S. State Department spokeswoman said: "The United States regrets this action and we continue to urge all nuclear powers including France to refrain from any further nuclear tests."

Several of France's European Union allies were guarded in their protests, with statements by Austria, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden hours after the blast. Switzerland and Russia also reaffirmed their opposition to tests.

Protesters burned an effigy of Mr. Chirac in front of the French Embassy in Rome.

Japanese Youth Is First Fatality On Bullet Trains

The Associated Press

TOKYO — A teenager has become the first person killed on Japan's high-speed trains.

Yusuke Kawanazaki, 17, died at Mishima station near Tokyo after he got caught in a car door, the railroad company said Thursday. The train dragged Mr. Kawanazaki more than 100 yards along the platform before he fell on the tracks. The Kyoto news agency said Mr. Kawanazaki's coat got stuck in the door and that he suffered fatal head wounds.

Railroad officials said it was the first fatal accident involving the high-speed trains, since service began in 1964. The so-called bullet trains can travel at 210 kilometers an hour (130 miles an hour).

In the only other tragedy, a man ran in front of a bullet train in 1992 and was killed in an apparent suicide.

Japanese stations display warnings to riders not to board trains as the doors are closing.

Chinese Court Upholds Top Dissident's 14-Year Sentence

Reuters

BEDING — A Chinese court on Thursday rejected an unreasonable appeal of the dissident Wei Jingsheng and upheld a lower court's sentence of 14 years in prison for plotting to subvert the government.

"The appeal of Wei Jingsheng was unreasonable and had to be rejected," the Xinhua press agency quoted Chief Judge Wang Yi of the Beijing People's Higher Court as saying.

Mr. Wei, 45, has no more appeals. "This is the final trial," a court spokesman said.

Mr. Wei now enters prison to begin his second lengthy jail

term. He was expected to be held in solitary confinement, as in the past, diplomats said.

"After this verdict, according to the law, he will be handed over to prison authorities to serve his sentence," the spokesman said. Officials refused to say where Mr. Wei would be held.

Mr. Wei and his two lawyers attended the sentencing at the court in western Beijing, the spokesman said. Dozens of police surrounded the building, and foreign reporters were barred from covering the sentencing.

The appeals bench summoned Mr. Wei on Tuesday to a

hearing behind closed doors at which he spoke for more than one hour and gave a written statement. Xinhua said. His lawyers presented a 2,000-word defense.

"The evidence is conclusive and the facts brook no denial," the judge said in his decision.

Mr. Wei will be eligible for parole after serving half of his sentence, lawyers have said.

His family denounced the trial as a farce and said they planned to take action against the courts for dereliction of duty.

"We are very angry," Mr. Wei's sister, Wei Shanshan, said in a telephone interview

from her home in Hamburg, Germany.

"The courts are shameful," she said. "The trial was unfair. They had no legal basis to convict my brother."

In Paris, a Foreign Ministry spokesman voiced deep disappointment Thursday and demanded Mr. Wei's release.

The Beijing Number One People's Intermediate Court convicted Mr. Wei on Dec. 13 of financing China's struggling democracy movement, whose very existence is seen by the state as seditious because it questions the Communist Party's absolute rule.

That verdict triggered international condemnation, but Beijing responded by rebuking foreign countries for meddling in its domestic affairs.

Mr. Wei was first imprisoned in 1979 for "counterrevolutionary incitement," advocating democratic change and passing purported military secrets to a foreign reporter.

China paroled Mr. Wei in September 1993, six months before the end of his 15-year term. He was arrested again on April 1, 1994, after meeting John H. Shattuck, U.S. assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor.

During his six months of freedom, Mr. Wei said he had no regrets and continued to criticize the Communist Party.

Trade Official Executed

A senior Chinese provincial official was executed Thursday for embezzlement and accepting bribes, The Associated Press reported from Beijing.

Wang Jianye, 42, a top trade official in Shenzhen, a boomtown in southern Guangdong province, was sentenced to death in April and lost his appeal. Hong Kong reports said that Mr. Wang was accused of taking \$1.2 million in bribes.

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THE WORLD'S DAILY NEWSPAPER

Oil Shortage Delaying Aid for North Koreans

Reuters

TOKYO — Japanese shipments of emergency rice aid to North Korea are being delayed because of Pyongyang's problems in sending vessels to carry it, apparently because of a shortage of oil, Japanese government sources said Thursday.

Japan announced in early October that it would supply North Korea with an extra 200,000 tons of emergency rice supplies to help it cope with food shortages following severe floods.

That was to be in addition to the 300,000 tons that Japan had agreed in June to supply the North Koreans.

A government source here said it appeared unlikely that more than half of the extra 200,000 tons promised will have reached North Korea by the end of this year.

Official Japanese sources attributed delays in shipping the rice to a smaller-than-planned number of vessels from North Korea. "We are assuming that a shortage of bunker fuel there is behind the delayed ship arrival," one said.

"When we sent rice under the first agreement, there was no serious problem of delivery," he added. "This indicates that oil supply in North Korea is facing a real crisis."

North Korea stunned foreign observers this year by breaking with its policy of stubborn self-reliance and asking both South Korea and Japan for emergency grain, saying that bad weather had caused some setbacks to the spring harvest.

But in Seoul, a South Korean official said Thursday: "For additional rice assistance, there must be a change in North Korea's attitude toward us."

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Canberra Cuts Aid to Solomons Over Destruction of Rain Forest

CANBERRA — Australia on Thursday canceled \$1.65 million worth of annual forest aid to the Solomon Islands and accused the tiny South Pacific nation of decimating its unique rain forests.

Australia's Pacific Islands minister, Gordon Bilney, said that at the current rate of logging in the Solomon Islands, all the forests could be cut down within 15 years.

"If the Solomon Islands does not reform its forestry sector, there will be nothing left," Mr. Bilney said. He said Australia was not prepared "to hand out aid dollars" to a country that refuses to practice responsible policies.

Timber is a major export for the Solomon Islands, an impoverished archipelago northwest of Australia that gained independence from Britain in 1978.

Okinawa Rape Trial Suspended

TOKYO — The trial of three American servicemen charged with raping a Japanese schoolgirl was suspended Thursday after mothers of two defendants asked to have the trial moved out of Okinawa.

The alleged rape of the 12-year-old girl, on the Japanese island of Okinawa on Sept. 4, has provoked deep outrage throughout Japan and has intensified friction in the military relationship between Japan and the United States.

The trial, which had been expected to end Thursday, will now be suspended until a higher court rules on the request for a change of venue.

Indonesia to Lift Meetings Ban

JAKARTA — Indonesia on Monday will cancel a decades-old restriction on public meetings that the authorities often used to silence anti-government activists, the Antara news agency reported on Thursday, quoting a government official.

After becoming independent in 1949, Indonesia retained a Dutch colonial law that banned five or more people from gathering without a police permit. Under President Suharto's rule, permission was rarely given to people likely to make speeches critical of the government.

Seoul Bars Travel for 39 Suspects

SEOUL — Prosecutors investigating a 1979 coup and a brutal crackdown on anti-government protesters six months later said Thursday that 39 people suspected of involvement have been barred from leaving the country.

Among them were former President Chun Doo Hwan, who has been indicted for allegedly leading the military coup that brought him to power. Five members of the National Assembly were also on the list.

VOICES From Asia

Ichiro Ozawa, the new leader of Japan's opposition New Frontier Party: "Japan is already in a very bad situation politically and economically. If this situation remains the same, it will become incurable." (Reuters)

Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, foreign minister of Pakistan, on India's allegations that Pakistan was involved in a recent drop of weapons from a cargo plane flying over rural India: "It has become a knee-jerk habit of the Indian leadership to blame Pakistan for all their ills." (AP)

Koken Nosaka, a Japanese government spokesman, on the latest nuclear test by France: "You may say Japan's response is always the same, but we will tenaciously raise our voice and demand nuclear tests be halted." (Reuters)

EUROPE

French Officers in UN Force Reported to Have Been Tortured by Bosnia Serbs

By Barry James
International Herald Tribune

PARIS — Long before the shooting down and subsequent mistreatment of two French pilots in August, Bosnian Serbian troops had tortured, beaten and humiliated a captured French lieutenant in front of his men, a newspaper reported Thursday.

The French soldiers were among 350 UN hostages of different nationalities captured earlier this year following NATO air strikes on Bosnian Serbian positions.

France has said nothing about the reported degrading treatment and torture meted out to the officer, and the Ministry of Defense

declined to comment on the article Thursday by the Sarajevo correspondent of the Paris newspaper Le Figaro, Eric Biégala.

He reported that the Bosnian Serbs:

- Made the lieutenant put on a Bosnian Serb uniform and then kneel in the line of fire of Bosnian Muslim snipers.

- Made him undergo a mock execution in front of his companions watching from an observation post 50 meters away.

- Allowed him to be insulted by the widow of a Bosnian Serbian soldier killed in fighting, and then plunged the lieutenant's face into the dead man's entrails.

Le Figaro identified the officer only as Lieutenant Bonraisin.

Mr. Biégala said that the Bosnian Serbs also beat up a black soldier serving in the French Army to try to make him confess he was a Muslim.

The 12 French soldiers were manning an observation post on the Vrbanka Bridge in Sarajevo on May 27 when they were outnumbered and overrun by Bosnian Serbs.

The post was later recaptured by the French after a brief firefight, and negotiations began for an exchange of prisoners. Meanwhile, the French prisoners were held in a building on the front line where they were beaten, insulted, tortured and subjected to mock executions, Mr. Biégala reported.

When they were eventually released at

the end of June, the men were in a state of shock and had to be given several days of rest. Mr. Biégala said they were sworn to secrecy about their experience.

Still, at the time, the commander of the Fourth French Battalion in Sarajevo, Lieutenant Colonel Eric Roussel, identified the Serbs taking part in the hostage-taking as regular units under orders from superiors.

Some of those who gave and undertook the orders to humiliate the French are still in place in Sarajevo, and the French authorities still need to deal with them to implement the NATO peace plan for Bosnia. Le Figaro said this may be one of the reasons why the French are so anxious

to prevent news about the mistreatment of their men from receiving publicity.

The Defense Ministry has acknowledged that the two French pilots, Captain Frédéric Chiffot and Lieutenant José Souvignat, were subjected to "very tough psychological pressure" and that they received "brutal" treatment from the local population after their Mirage 2000 fighter was shot down during a bombing raid Aug. 30.

But a ministry spokesman denied that the two officers had been ordered to change their testimony to conform to an agreed version of the event.

According to French defense sources, the psychological pressure included death

threats, mock executions, deprivation of food, the withholding of information and frequent changes of place of imprisonment.

The pilots were held by men loyal to the Bosnian Serbian military leader, General Ratko Mladic, who is under UN indictment for war crimes. He was reported to have been present during an operation to set the broken leg of Lieutenant Souvignat.

Both men were injured when they fell badly on rocky terrain after ejecting from their stricken plane.

Although they have not spoken of their ordeal, the father of Captain Chiffot, a retired military officer, confirmed that his son had been beaten.

French Strikers Are Forced Out Of Mail Center

Reuters

PARIS — Riot police on Thursday removed striking postal workers from a mail sorting center in Caen in Normandy that they had occupied for a month, French radio said.

The report said the strikers left the building without resistance when the police arrived at about 2 A.M. and towed away three vehicles that blocked the entrance.

The police gathered 600,000 letters and packages that had piled up at the center, which employs 300 people.

The strikers were demanding extra staff and employment security for workers on temporary contracts.

They began their protest during a three-week nationwide public transport strike that ended just before Christmas.



ALL TOGETHER — City drivers towing a bus on a Marseille street Thursday on the 22d day of a wage protest.

Nationalist General to Seek Russian Presidency

Reuters

MOSCOW — A prominent former Russian Army commander, General Alexander I. Lebed, entered the race for the Kremlin on Thursday in a powerful potential challenge to President Boris N. Yeltsin.

Aldes said that the 45-year-old retired general had been endorsed by leaders of his nationalist Congress of Russian Communities as the party's candidate for the June 16 pres-

idential election. "I can confirm this," Serafim Yushkov, the party's press chief, said.

General Lebed, a gruff populist who resigned last year after clashing repeatedly with the Kremlin, is a sharp critic of Mr. Yeltsin and the war in Chechnya.

He has won a strong popular following for his defense of the interests of ethnic Russians in the former Soviet republics. But his party stumbled badly in the Dec. 17 parliamentary

election, failing to win the 5 percent of the vote necessary to win seats in the State Duma on a party basis.

General Lebed, however, had no problem winning a seat in an individual constituency.

Mr. Yushkov said by telephone that General Lebed had won endorsement at a meeting of his party's leadership, and that final approval of his candidacy would come at a party congress next month.

The general, an Afghan War veteran and former commander of Russian forces in a breakaway region of Moldova, said Thursday that he saw Mr. Yeltsin and the ultranationalist politician Vladimir V. Zhirinovskiy as his main rivals for the presidency, the Interfax news agency reported.

Other presidential candidates are expected to include Gennadi Zyuganov — whose Communist Party outpaced all

rivals in the parliamentary poll, winning about 158 of the Duma's 450 seats — and the liberal economist Grigori Yavlinsky, whose Yabloko bloc won 45 Duma seats.

Mr. Yeltsin, 64, who is recovering from heart trouble, has said he will not announce until February whether he will seek re-election.

If he does not run, Prime Minister Viktor S. Chernomyrdin, whose Our Home is Russia bloc won 54 Duma seats, may run instead.

Conservatives Clash Over Turkish Leadership

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

ANKARA — Efforts to forestall an Islamic government in Turkey ran into trouble on Thursday as the leaders of the two main secular parties clashed over who should head an alternative coalition.

"Ciller's True Path Party is insisting on Ciller's prime ministry, their insistence is unacceptable for our part," said Mesut Yilmaz, leader of the center-right Motherland Party.

He was referring to the outgoing prime minister, Tansu Ciller, who heads the country's other main conservative force, the True Path Party. Earlier this week, the two parties agreed to bury their differences

and forge a coalition to block the way of the pro-Islamic Welfare Party, which won more Parliament seats than any other party in general elections Sunday.

But personal rivalry between Mr. Yilmaz and Mrs. Ciller is proving to be the main obstacle in the search for a stable majority in the 550-seat legislature.

On Wednesday, Mr. Yilmaz said he was ready to become prime minister, but he added that if Mrs. Ciller blocked him the ersatz allies should make way for a third party to take the leadership.

Newsperson Erbakan's Welfare Party won 158 seats, falling well short of a majority. Traditionally the president names as

prime minister the leader of the party with the most seats in Parliament, but in the absence of likely coalition partners, Mr. Erbakan's chances of becoming prime minister are small.

Final unofficial election results released Wednesday showed the True Path Party with 135 seats, the Motherland Party 131, the Democratic Left Party 76, and the Republican People's Party 50.

Meanwhile, the army reaffirmed its support for a secular state. "The Turkish armed forces are a reformist, unshakable power against any kind of fanaticism," said the chief of staff, General Ismail Hakkı Karadayı, at a ceremony in Kayseri. (AFP, AP)

Autopsies Show Murder And Suicide by Cultists

Reuters

GRENOBLE, France — The prosecutor investigating the deaths of 16 people who were members of the Order of the Solar Temple said he hoped his investigation would mean that the sect's second murder-suicide ritual would be the last.

The French prosecutor, Jean-François Lorrans, said autopsies showed that 14 people, including three children, were

strangled and shot point blank with a 22 caliber rifle by two other cult members, one of whom was a police officer. Those two then killed themselves with revolvers.

Of the 14 bodies laid out in ritual star shape, 11 adults had been shot through the head and heart and three children each had been killed with a single bullet through the forehead.

All had apparently been sedated and shot in their sleep. The two other bodies had police revolvers near their right

hands. The clothes of all had been set on fire.

Mr. Lorrans said the apparent murderers were two French policemen who were members of the group. But he later said one of the policemen was among those who had been shot with a rifle. He said the investigation would look for possible accomplices.

The charred bodies were found Saturday in an Alpine forest clearing, a week after they died.

The apparent mix of murder and suicide mirrored last year's ritual in which 53 members of the Swiss sect died in Switzerland and Canada, many bodies bearing bullet wounds.

Mr. Lorrans, who has opened an inquiry into "murders and a criminal group," said investigations were being mounted in France, Switzerland and other countries in an effort to keep the ritual from being repeated.

"An in-depth investigation into these murders can allow us to know better the sect's environment, its intentions, its plans and — I hope, but it is not certain — avoid the repeat of such a tragedy," he said.

Mr. Lorrans said that the bodies had yet to be formally identified but that there were "certain convergences" with a list of 16 missing sect members. He said the dead were likely to include Patrick Vuarnet; his mother, Edith; his female companion and her 6-year-old daughter, Tanya, and the two children of one of the policemen, Jean-Pierre Lardanchet.

Calls to ban such sects are mounting in France. But politicians note that a ban would infringe on religious freedom.

France Telecom Plans Rate Cuts

AFP News

PARIS — France Telecom, the country's national telephone company, said Thursday that it was planning to reduce its rates for international calls next month by an average of 9 percent.

The company, facing growing competition, was also reported — by the French daily Le Monde — to be planning a seven-franc increase in its basic monthly line rental, to 52 francs from 45.

BRIEFLY EUROPE

Dini Prepares to Resign

ROME — Prime Minister Lamberto Dini of Italy will submit his resignation to President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro on Saturday, a parliamentary party leader said Thursday after a meeting with Mr. Dini.

Mr. Scalfaro has said Parliament must then decide if it wants to move to an early general election at the start of 1996 or if the political will exists to create a cross-party government to carry out constitutional changes.

Mr. Dini, a former central banker, heads a government of technocrats installed amid Italy's political deadlock last January following the collapse of Silvio Berlusconi's center-right coalition government. He has promised to resign by the end of the year. Mr. Dini was due to preside at a Friday cabinet meeting called to approve an end-of-year budget package — the final item on the government's agenda. (Reuters)

Turkish Fighter Crashes

ATHENS — A Turkish F-4 jet fighter crashed in the Aegean Sea on Thursday after it was intercepted by Greek F-16 warplanes near the island of Lesbos. The Turkish chief of staff's office said the plane went down "purely due to technical reasons."

The Greek Defense Ministry said the two Turkish crewmen apparently ejected to safety in the sea about 10 miles (16 kilometers) west of the island, which is close to the Turkish coast. The ministry said that one of the airmen was rescued by a helicopter and that a search was underway for the other crewman.

According to ministry sources, the two Turkish F-4s approached Greek air space near the island and were intercepted by the two

Greek jets. They said one of the F-4s suffered what appeared to be a mechanical failure while trying to maneuver away from the Greek planes. (AP)

Hammer and Sickle Die

BERLIN — One of the last vestiges of East Germany is about to disappear when Eastern passports adorned with the hammer and sickle become invalid — more than five years after German unity.

Heading warnings of 1,000 Deutsche mark (\$700) fines for failing to replace their papers, many Easterners were somberly handing in identity cards marked with the seal of the German Democratic Republic, a country that disappeared in 1990.

Under the terms of unification, the East German passports and ID cards were to be valid until the end of 1995. Nothing changes for the Westerners, who continue using their Federal Republic papers. (Reuters)

Polish Tax Law Annulled

WARSAW — The Constitutional Tribunal ruled Thursday that an income tax law due to take effect in 1996 was illegal because it was introduced without an adequate warning period.

The ruling means the statute, imposing higher taxes on the growing middle class, will not go into force and that 1995 rates will be retained.

The decision is a belated victory for former President Lech Walesa, who had vetoed the law earlier this year. After his veto was overturned by Parliament, Mr. Walesa appealed to the high court.

The law would have raised taxation for the middle class while lowering it slightly for the poorest people. (Reuters)

Spying Evidence Pledged by Pole

Reuters

WARSAW — A Polish security service chief said Thursday that he could easily give prosecutors more evidence on alleged past contacts between Prime Minister Jozef Oleksy and foreign intelligence, the State Protection Office said.

Mr. Oleksy, who has denied the charges and had vowed to work on as usual, announced that he would take a vacation next month, partly to avoid any suggestion that he was interfering in investigations into the issue.

The deputy head of the State Protection Office, Jerzy Norzka, said the security service would "not have a problem" complying with a Jan. 20 deadline to provide extra information sought by military prosecutors before they could launch a formal probe of Mr. Oleksy, the PAP news agency said.

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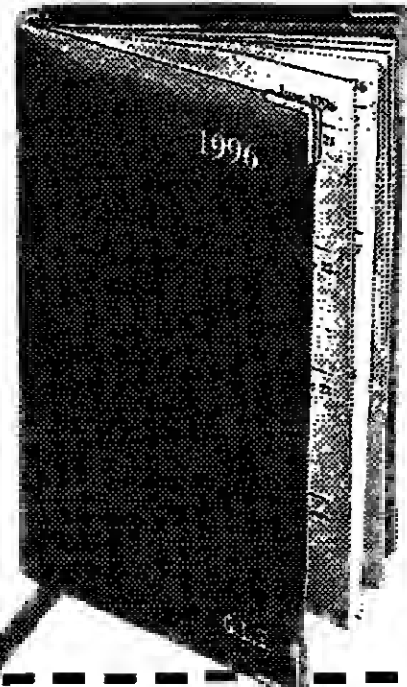
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For years, diplomats had fruitlessly de-

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These are big things, but so far no one has thought or talked about them much as America goes into this election year. It is time for a real foreign policy debate in the Capitol and the country.

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There is, however, a price to be paid. It's said that something needs to change if we don't want anything to change. For the European Union, however, the most likely conclusion seems to be that

last night's explosions and shootings, an official announcement said tonight [Dec. 28]. Nearly 2,000 persons were detained for questioning concerning the explosions, which rocked Jerusalem and Tel Aviv and destroyed the Criminal Investigation building in Jerusalem. Action by authorities

terday's attacks, the clandestine broadcasting station "Jewish Resistance Movement" said that it assumed that the attacks were made by members of the illegal Jewish "Irgun Zvai Leumi" (National Military Organization).



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OPINION/LETTERS

Predictions for 1996: Whitewater, Bosnia and Diana's Best-Seller

By William Safire

WASHINGTON — Only two picks right last year, a record for the 22-year history of this much-maligned pool of predictions for the next year; now let's go for a clean sweep:

1. The Whitewater affair will (a) spawn a scathing Senate report titled "Doubting Thomases"; (b) be a fizzle with no new independent counsel convictions; (c) reveal petty crimes in Arkansas and serious wrongdoing in Washington; (d) be concluded by a post-election presidential pardon of Webster Hubbell, the disgraced associate attorney general, and any others indicted or convicted, except Hillary Rodham Clinton.

2. The American economy will (a) sail serenely onward and upward; (b) run into recession-deflation fears and a 10 percent drop in the market; (c) grow under 2 percent for three quarters, then boom, with the Dow breaking 6,000.

3. Dividing the Republican Convention will be (a) aborting the abortion plank; (b) rebouncing affirmative action; (c) going nativist on immigration; (d) term limits; (e) ban on assault weapons.

4. Political summer of the year will be (a) abandonment of the Republican Party by women; (b) abandonment of the Democratic Party by blacks; (c) stay-home revolt of the angry white geezers; (d) warning of the third-party movement.

5. Longest lines on a celebrity book tour will be for (a) Mrs. Clinton's "Politics and Parenting"; (b) Diana's "Windsors and Losers: My Battle Royal"; (c) O. J. Simpson's "Confessions."

6. Nobel Peace Prize will go to (a) Irish peacemakers; (b) Shimon Peres of Israel and Hafez Assad of Syria; (c) Secretary of State Warren M. Christopher; (d) Wei Jing-sheng in jail.

7. Hollywood will blunt cultural criticism by giving Academy Awards to (a) Jane Austen's and Emma Thompson's "Sense and Sensibility"; (b) Barry Sonnenfeld's "Get Shorty"; (c) Edward Burns's "The Brothers McMullen"; (d) Oliver Stone's emotionally true "How JFK, LBJ and Nixon Did It in Vince Foster."

8. Republican ticket will be (a) Senator Bob Dole and Governor Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey; (b) Mr. Dole and General Colin Powell; (c) Mr. Dole and Senator Sam Nunn, Democrat of Georgia; (d) Lamar Alexander and Senator Richard G. Lugar of Indiana.

9. Biggest 1996 election upset will be in (a) Russia, where the Communists won't win; (b) Israel, where Mr. Peres won't win; (c) America, where President Bill Clinton won't win.

10. In congressional races, (a) the mellowing of the speaker, Newt Gingrich, will result in the retention of a Republican House majority; (b) the demonization of Mr. Gingrich will cost Republicans the House; (c) a Clinton sweep will take the House and narrow the Republican Senate majority; (d) a Dole triumph will result in a White House and Congress dominated by a single party.

11. The Supreme Court will (a) not apply the racial "strict scrutiny" standard to state-supported military schools that exclude women; (b) strike down the Colorado amendment prohibiting localities from enacting gay-rights statutes; (c) end gerrymandering of voting districts that discriminates against white voters; (d) turn down New York City's effort to adjust federal census to increase power of cities; (e) bid farewell to Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist in the event of a Republican presidential victory.

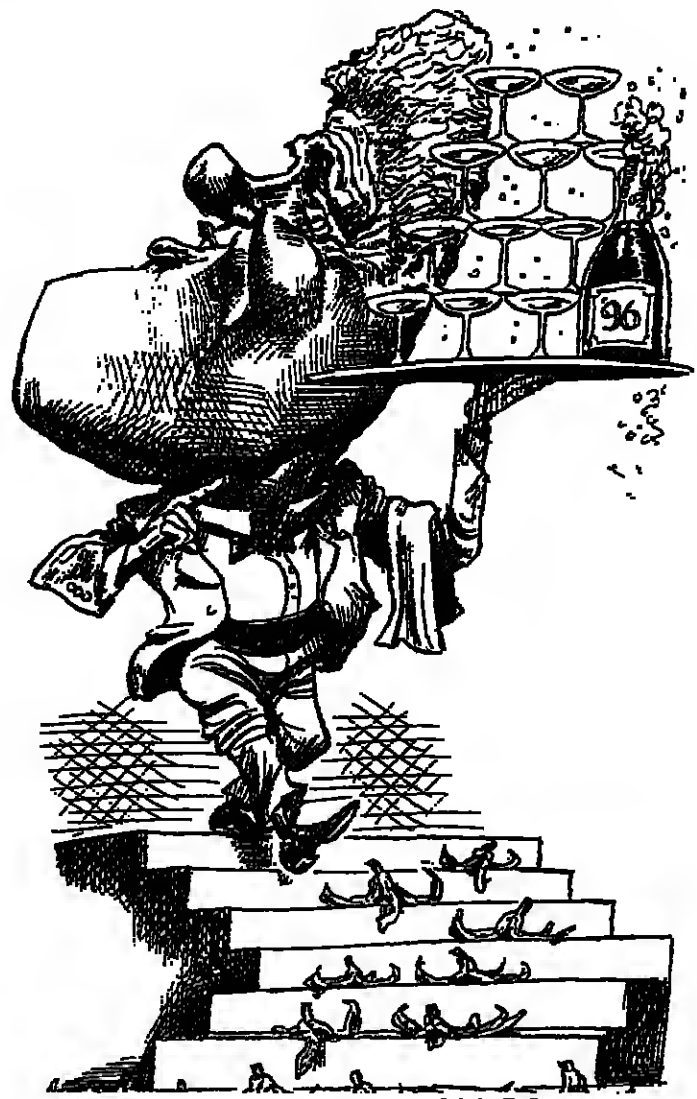
12. The CIA revelation will be (a) the cost of the mole Aldrich H. Ames to U.S. operations in Italy, France and Latin America; (b) the discovery of the Second World War high up in CIA by the FBI; (c) the losing war with French intelligence; (d) the agency's secret victories over terrorists from Iran.

13. By year-end in Bosnia, (a) peacekeeping will be judged a success, with NATO strengthened and bipartisan U.S. leadership hailed; (b) guerrillas will harass American troops, leading to ignominious withdrawal and resurgence of isolationism; (c) withdrawal takes place with fingers crossed, as balanced Balkan forces prepare to resume fighting.

My picks: 1-c, 2-b, 3-a, 4-d, 5-b, 6-d, 7-a, 8-b, 9-all, 10-d, 11-all, 12-b, 13-a.

Winners of the pool will be given the opportunity to invest in any of three newly issued debentures: the Gingrich bond (no maturity), the Dole bond (no interest), or the Clinton bond (no principal).

The New York Times.



Nourished on Cynicism, Baby Boomers Turn 50

By Richard Harwood

WASHINGTON — Cheryl Russell, writing in American Demographics magazine, alerts us to a forthcoming news media extravaganza starting Jan. 1, 1996. That is the date on which "the first 7.745 of 78 million baby boomers turn 50." By year's end, 3.4 million will have reached that age, and by the year 2005 baby boomers will represent a majority of the American population aged 50 to 74.

We can thus expect stories and

MEANWHILE

introspective essays galore. The boomers already are the most celebrated generation in our history. That is because there are so many of them, because they are a generation "entirely unlike older generations of Americans," Ms. Russell writes, "both in attitudes and lifestyles" and because the ringmasters of the news media are themselves boomers with a self-conscious and understandable interest in delineating how far they have come and where they are going now.

This is the time in their lives when they are concerned about putting kids through college, the time when a lot of divorces are likely to occur, the time when they are at or nearing the peak of their earning powers, when they are beginning to worry more about their careers and their health, the time to start thinking about retirement.

They are the first generation to have grown up with television, and have become the most affluent and educated cohort of Americans in history. As they reach this new milestone of middle age, the newspapers have a particular interest in them as customers. We are, in a manner of speaking, holding our breath in the hope that with the graying of this generation they and their children will find newspapers relevant to their lives. We worry, too, that the "negativism" and "tabloidism" of the press have turned them off.

People with the most money and education buy the most newspapers.

The boomers rank high on both counts and behave as expected, buying more newspapers than other age groups. But measured in terms of household penetration, the numbers are not encouraging. Thirty years ago, more than 80 percent of Americans 35 to 54 read a paper on an average weekday; the percentage today is 65 percent.

The attitudes of the boomers — shaped, many believe, by the news media — may have something to do with this. They grew up in an era in which many of the old certitudes of American life have been shaken by social and economic upheavals, including a loss of status and economic position by the middle class and by corrosive racial and gender divisiveness. This seems to have produced among the boomers cynicism and distrust toward almost all of the institutions of our society.

The press is often blamed for this state of affairs. It is dominated by members of the baby boom generation who, as would be expected, share many of the attitudes of their contemporaries — cynicism, disaffection and suspicion of American social and political institutions.

But we should not make too much of that. The nature of journalism has been the enemy of idealism and the source of cynicism among American reporters and editors throughout our history. They come face to face daily with disasters and wars, murderers, thieves, rapists, embezzlers, corruption, lies, hypocrisy and betrayal.

For all that, however, they retain a good deal of the idealism and optimism of earlier days. This is especially true of national journalists. The majority, pollsters report, believe that officials in Washington, executives, clergymen and military leaders are basically honest and ethical people. Their instincts are far less negative than the populace at large.

We can give thanks for that while asking ourselves if "they," meaning "average Americans," are too prone to whine about things as they are or if these people know something about life that we do not.

The Washington Post.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Oil's Responsibility

Regarding "Big Oil Should Face What It Sows" by Jim Hoagland (Opinion, Dec. 2):

Contrary to Mr. Hoagland's assertion, "Big Oil" is not a world citizen — whatever the nebulous term may signify. Those Western oil

companies he condemns for not doing more about Nigeria's execution of the writer Ken Saro-Wiwa are commercial enterprises producing an irreplaceable component of industrial economies. That is what they are intended to do and it is on those terms alone that we must assess them. To rely upon a commercial agent to punish the Nigerians is neither tactically advisable nor strategically sound. We, the citizenry of countries who are outraged, must prevail upon the agents most suitable for punishing the Nigerian regime: our own governments.

An Austrian Poet

Regarding "Too Bad, Monetaries, Maasrich Criteria Are Out of Season" (Opinion, Dec. 14) by Guido Brunner:

Mr. Brunner incorrectly describes the poet Ingeborg Bachmann ("Chillier days are coming") as German. Mrs. Bachmann, one of the most important writers of our time, was born in Klagenfurt, Austria and always was Austrian.

EVA NOWOTNY, Paris.

The writer is the Austrian ambassador to France.

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Diamonds and Debutantes: Waltzing the Night Away at Vienna Balls

By Mariana Schroeder

VIENNA — A gray drizzle had settled over Vienna as we squeezed into the last parking place in front of the Altstadt Vienna, Mr. Hirsch, part butler, part concierge and the soul of the hotel, deposited our suitcases in a tiny room on the ground floor and apologized profusely that he was unable to give us a larger room upstairs. Like most of the city's hotels, the Altstadt was fully booked for the Vienna Opera Ball weekend.

The Opera Ball was the first of three we planned to attend during our weekend in Vienna last February.

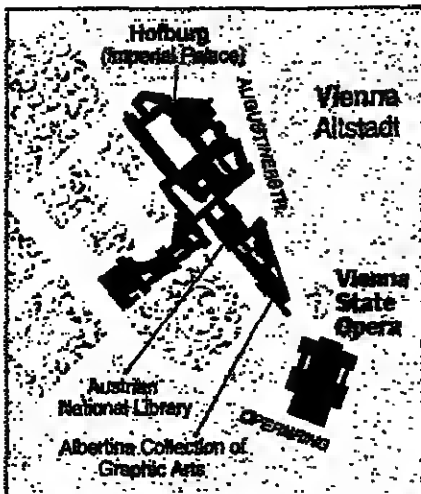
Each year nearly 5,000 paying guests and more than 1,500 members of the ball staff and opera company attend the Opera Ball, a tradition that has its roots in the 19th century. It is a celebration of the waltz and the Viennese way of life, with profits going toward next year's event.

The Austrian capital holds more than 300 balls every year. In season—from just before Christmas to just after Easter—there is a ball almost every night of the week and, on some nights, three or four. Every profession holds its own: the Policemen's Ball, the Taxi Drivers' Ball, the Confectioners' Ball. Some are private, open only to members, but most are open to the public, and everyone with a ticket, a ball gown and black or white tie is welcome.

The Vienna State Opera had been transformed overnight. In less than 36 hours, 350 workers had removed the seats, built additional boxes, laid a parquet dance floor and created a summer garden with lilac trees and balconies draped in pink carnations.

Liveried footmen stood at the entrance where guests were ascending the marble staircase. We checked our coats and watched the celebrities—Shirley MacLaine, Plácido Domingo, Birgit Nilsson, to name a few—before joining the procession to the mezzanine, where all the boxes are.

The most formal and elegant of the season, the Opera Ball is mainly for debutantes. One hundred and eighty couples, chosen from the 800 who apply, form the Opening Committee of debutantes and spend nearly a year drilling for the opening quadrille. The dress code is as rigid as the dance steps: long white gowns and iden-



tical rhinestone crownlets for the debutantes and white tie and tails for their escorts; mouse gray for the gentlemen in uniform, tails and floor-length evening gowns for everyone else. Jewels are brought out of safes or borrowed from discreet jewelers by the celebrated, and many Viennese men trot out their red and white sashes and Imperial decorations.

The ball opens with a trumpet fanfare followed by two ballet sequences danced by the ballet corps of the Vienna Opera. The debutantes and their escorts then enter from the stage into the ballroom and dance the quadrille. Those without box seats line the ballroom or buy additional standing room tickets for the backstage area. We decided to avoid the crowd and get a bird's-eye view from the balcony—the best place to be at the opening and the only place to view the intricate patterns of the quadrille.

Shortly after, the music stopped and two words boomed out of the loudspeakers: "Alles Walzer!" At that moment the ballroom shifted into a kaleidoscope of color as thousands of couples began to whirl to the one-two-three rhythm they learned as children.

Several orchestras and bands provided the onstop music. The opening fanfare was played by the brass ensemble of the opera's orchestra. The Vienna Opera Ball Orchestra, dedicated to preserving and playing Viennese dance music of the 19th century, was in the main ballroom, alternating with Axel Rot and his orchestra, a popular dance band.

It took us more than half an hour to make our way down staircases to the ballroom. When we finally got there the dance floor was so crowded we could barely move. Most of Vienna seemed to be at the ball. They paid the equivalent of \$265 to get in and an additional \$9,600 to nearly \$17,000 for a box, calculated at a rate of 9.92 schillings to \$1. A table for six in one of the outlying rooms costs \$1,020.

Dressing rooms, backstage areas, even the catacombs of the opera filled up with

ballgoers. In the basement a disco, with music arranged by a popular radio station, catered to the waltz weary, and the employee canteen served beer at \$4.90 a half pint for those who found the price of \$300 to \$400 for a bottle of Champagne upstairs a bit too high. The result was a mixture of glamour and grunge, designer gowns and family jewels rubbing shoulders with polyester and recycled bridesmaid's dresses. Celebrities come to be seen and rarely leave the safety of their boxes. But the rest come to waltz. And once the VIPs have departed, the opera belongs to them. They are the ones who dance until 6 A.M. and then adjourn to cafés and hotels that open early to serve an after-the-ball breakfast of beer and goulash soup.

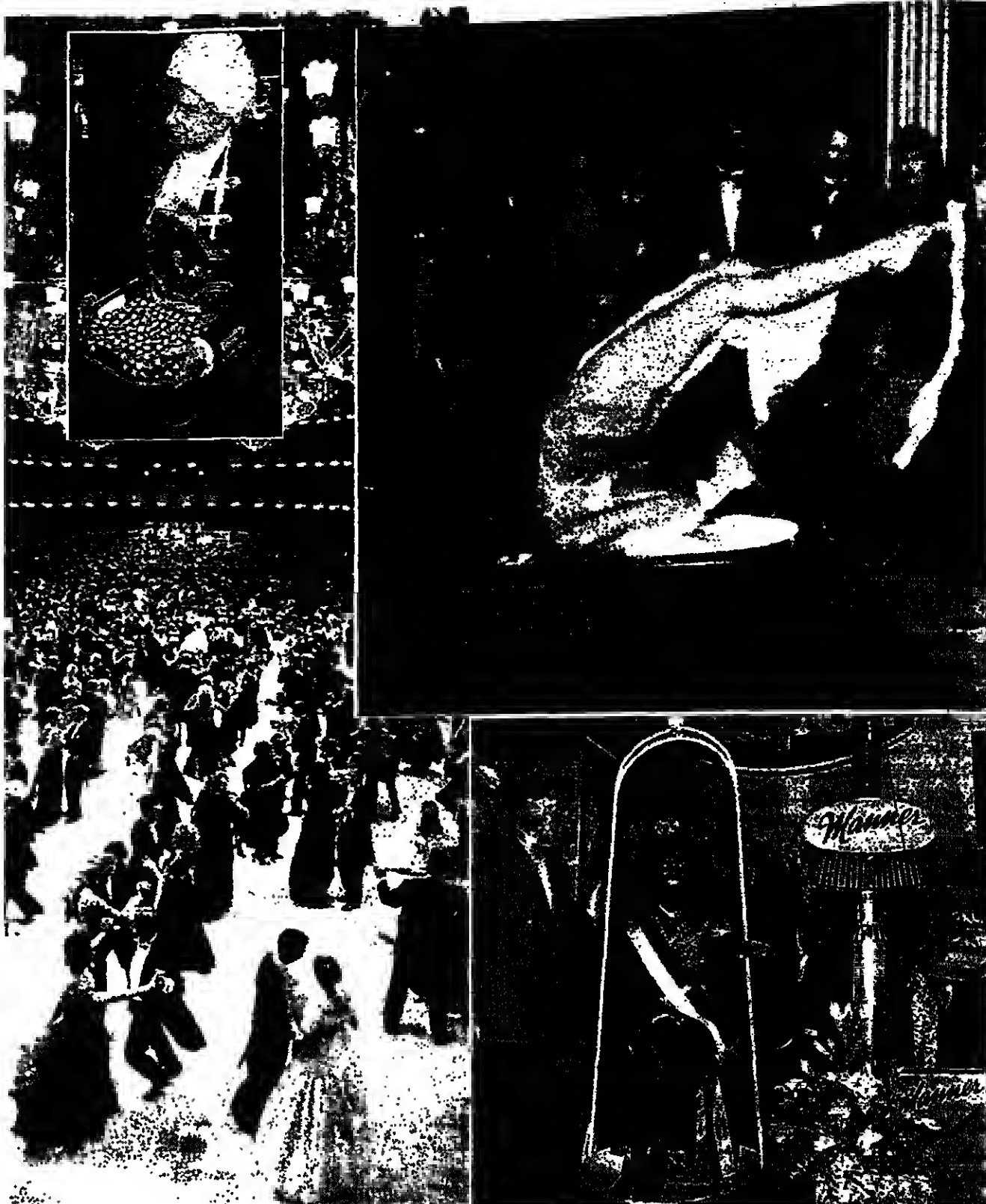
Our second ball—the Bonbon—is held by the Süßwarenhandl, or candy and sweets dealers of Austria—not to be confused with the confectioners, who hold theirs later. The Konzerthaus, a concert hall dating from 1912-13, was transformed into several ballrooms, each with its own orchestra. The decorations, which paled in comparison to those at the Opera Ball, consisted mainly of potted palms, flowers borrowed from the city greenhouses and a revolving mirrored globe in the main ballroom. Candy makers advertised their products with displays and signs placed among the potted azaleas and wilted carnations.

The ballgoers (about 4,500) were, on the whole, much younger and less expensively dressed, and the event far more local; most of the guests seemed to know one another, making it difficult for outsiders like us to mingle. As at most balls in Vienna, the ticket to the Bonbon Ball (\$46) gets you through the door and nothing else. Tables are additional. Refreshments tend to be liquid, with snack foods and light courses. The Viennese practice of eating before the ball, not during, made particular sense here.

The Magicians Ball, our last, at the Vienna Hilton, was a relaxed, relatively small affair, with no more than 1,000 guests. About half the men wore tuxedos instead of tails. There were fewer waltzes and more sambas and disco music, fewer diamonds and more sequins.

More than 100 magicians from all over the world performed at the ball. Each ballroom had its own orchestra and stage where the magicians performed on a rotating basis between dances. We had decided to spring for a table. For \$41 we sat on the sidelines of the main ballroom where we could watch the show, sip a glass of wine and relax between dances. At 3 A.M., having watched at least 40 wonderful magicians and danced two cha-chas and about a dozen waltzes, we wandered out to one of the food stands in the lobby and had hot dogs and goulash soup before returning to the Altstadt.

Mariana Schroeder, a writer who lives in Germany, wrote this for The New York Times.



Clockwise from top left: a candy server at the Bonbon Ball; Svetlana, the rubber lady from Ukraine, at the Magicians Ball; Miss Bonbon 1995 winning her weight in chocolate, and waltzing at the elegant Opera Ball.

HEAR THIS

■ AP tells us that a Rolls-Royce with driver for the night in New York on New Year's Eve is \$1,200, up \$200 from last year, tickets to the New York City Ballet's "Nutcracker" are \$6 more at \$140, and the Presidential Suite at the Plaza Hotel is \$15,000 for the night, up \$1,000. Drink up.

THE MOVIE GUIDE

Othello

Directed by Oliver Parker.

Kenneth Branagh has the rare ability to deliver Shakespearean dialogue as if it were street talk, with an expert casualness that keeps the meaning of the language crystal clear. Branagh's terrific skill as a popularizer is a boon to the new "Othello," in which he plays an accessible, alarmingly human Iago to Laurence Fishburne's voluptuous Moor. Within Iago resides the heart of the tragedy, which loses its complexity when the character radiates nothing but evil. Thanks to Branagh's seductively colloquial performance, this time the character's poisonous nature is revealed in full. This "Othello" has been truncated, rearranged and illustrated by its director, Oliver Parker, in unapologetically high-handed ways. But it has also been given a blunt vitality, one

that makes this look like the timeliest of Shakespeare's tragedies. (Janet Maslin, NYT)

Sense and Sensibility

Directed by Ang Lee.

Let neither pride nor prejudice dissuade you from the abundant pleasures of "Sense and Sensibility." Based upon Jane Austen's satire of 18th-century dating games, this rapturous romance is not only laugh-out-loud funny but it demonstrates how little humankind has evolved in matters of the heart. Emma Thompson, who plays the sensible Elinor, the eldest of the poor but pretty Dashwood girls of Sussex, also wrote the adaptation. It is her first script and the first non-Chinese project for the Taiwanese director Ang Lee, whose films "Pushing Hands," "The Wedding Banquet" and "Eat Drink Man Woman," like

Austen's novels, expose the comic nuances of love and family life. "Sense and Sensibility" elegantly staged and masterfully acted right down to the smallest role, requires a bit of patience toward the end, as the outcome becomes increasingly obvious. But what romantic comedy does not broadcast its good intentions well in advance? And Austen—the great-grandmother of the genre—would doubtless have it no other way. (Rita Kempley, WP)

Dracula: Dead and Loving It

Directed by Mel Brooks.

The title "Dracula: Dead and Loving It" is so perfect that it's almost a good-will ambassador for Mel Brooks's slight but amusing new parody. Brooks may no longer be at the forefront of silly comedy, but he's still laying on the genre gags, horrible

puns and enema references with dependable good cheer. It's hard to resist a vampire film in which someone says: "Yes, we have Nosferatu. We have Nosferatu today." Brooks has recruited the ever-sporting Leslie Nielsen to play a charmingly dim Dracula and give this film the feeling of an undead "Naked Gun." Brooks also has fun with an accent since he casts himself as the very Teutonic Dr. Van Helsing, who says "anekt" for "attacked." Brooks and Nielsen are clearly on the same wavelength, which makes this Van Helsing just fine as Dracula's nemesis. (Janet Maslin, NYT)

Cry, the Beloved Country

Directed by Darrell James Roodt.

The first major film to be made in the newly democratic South Africa, "Cry, the

Beloved Country" carries a heavy sense of its own historic weight. The movie, directed by Darrell James Roodt, is an exercise in solemn uplift that is touching despite an atmosphere that at moments becomes stiflingly reverential. In adapting Alan Paton's classic 1948 novel for the screen, Roodt, the young South African filmmaker who directed "Sarafina," and his screenwriter Ronald Harwood have remained faithful to the hushed, semi-biblical tone of the book, while using the cinematography and music to add a romantic gloss. The two central performances in the film are strikingly different in style. James Earl Jones's Reverend Stephen Kumalo is a sad, plodding bulldog of a man, the weight of Job bowing his shoulders. Richard Harris's James Jarvis, alarmingly gaunt, with yellowish white hair, trembling lips and an eagle's glare, is flamboyantly volatile. Beneath the

haughty aristocratic facade lies a spoiled, hot-tempered crybaby. (Stephen Holden, NYT)

Cutthroat Island

Directed by Renny Harlin.

It's cutthroat time at the movies, all right, when the end of the year brings a stampede of bloated entertainments no one wants to see. Suicidal case in point: "Cutthroat Island," this winter's "Waterworld," which stars Thailand, Malta, two cannon-firing pirate ships, one monkey and Geena Davis as a pirate queen. It's not possible to believe that Davis is the captain of a pirate ship, and it's not even fun to try. "Cutthroat Island" is too stupidly stumpy for children, too cartoonish for sane adults and not raucous enough for anyone who regards Davis in a tight-laced bodice as its main attraction. (Janet Maslin, NYT)



Leslie Nielsen as the Count and Amy Yasbeck as Mina in Mel Brooks's "Dracula: Dead and Loving It."

BOOKS

JOURNEY TO MY FATHER, ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER

By Israel Zim. Translated by Barbara Harshav. Illustrated. 240 pages. \$21.95. Arcade Publishing.

Reviewed by Richard Eder

IN 1935, the writer Isaac Bashevis Singer abandoned his wife and little son in Warsaw, came to New York, and eventually remarried. Twenty years later the son sailed from Israel to see him. It was not out of love, Israel Zim writes, but curiosity and a need to "close the circle."

"Journey to My Father, Isaac Bashevis Singer," an awkward, revealing and sometimes bewitching book, closes nothing. Instead it circles and circles like a conjuring dance, one that lasted for the next three decades until Singer's death in 1991. What is conjured up is the son's fury, pain and enchantment with the elusive old magician he can neither quite forgive nor give up.

Zim's ship gets into New York on a winter midnight. It is 14 hours late, he is not sure what his father looks like and he sees

nobody who might resemble him. Finally, he spots a man with reddish hair, waiting uncertainly. "Might you be Mr. Singer?" the young man asks. "I might." "Is it possible that you're my father?" "It's possible," the other replies, and he adds: "Everything's possible. You never know if your pranks from bygone times didn't produce a son who'll pop up suddenly from across the ocean and demand his share of the inheritance."

Israel storms off. Twenty years of a bitterly endured abandonment have summoned up precisely the figure he'd imagined, precisely the kind of sardonic apparition that anger, jealousy, lust or revenge invoke in a Singer tale—except that Singer would have added an additional twist. The real father—pale, diffident, uncommunicative—is waiting outside, and father and son take a taxi, almost in silence, to Singer's apartment on the Upper West-side.

"Journey" records that silent taxi ride. It goes on to record 35 years of encounters, sporadic companionship and considerable collaboration—Zim translated a number of his father's works from Yiddish

to Hebrew—and a tentative friendship. But the son never quite got close. How do you get close to a writer like Singer? You become one of his characters.

A Communist at the time, member of a far-left kibbutz, a brawny, athletic, make-the-desert-flower Israeli, Zim—who as an adolescent tore up the few letters Singer sent—is everything his pale, unfit mystic of a father is not. A "Luf-mensch"—airy intellectual—he calls him patronizingly. Yet over and over, as with that first winter arrival, Zim's recollections keep turning into Singer tales.

The first visit came close to

WHAT THEY'RE READING

• Méliande d'Assignies, tutorial fellow at the University of Sussex, is reading "The Franklin Scare" by Jerome Charyn.

"I find it deviant, perverse and well written. You see the ins and outs of the White House during Franklin Roosevelt's presidential term, which adds intrigue without being sensationalist." (Charlotte Spector, IHT)

being a second abandonment. Zim wakes up in the apartment the next morning "empty of feeling." He sees his father come out of the bathroom, thin legs and feet protruding from an old brown bathrobe, and sit down to write "without a word." Singer is wary, as if fearing any demand on time, on money, on history. Never does he offer an apology for running off and remarrying, and Zim is too proud to ask for one. Penniless, Zim is left to his own resources, apart from an occasional dollar his father would hand out.

Over the next three decades there are visits back and forth between Israel and New York,

walks, talks and the collaboration of translation. "I had managed to build a father for myself," Zim writes; but over and over, amid anecdote and recollection, he brings up that occasional dollar. The father points out years later that he paid for the trip, after all. But with blocked Israeli currency, the son retorts. He named him as his translator, says Singer. To save money, says Zim. He bought a cot and mattress for him to sleep on. Singer protests. Father and son fade; the fabulist Isaac Bashevis Singer takes possession.

Speaking of himself, Zim can be strained and sometimes clumsy. His anecdotal portrait of Singer, on the other hand, is precious, comic and with an occasional touch of the alarming.

There is a glimpse of him as a young man uncomfortably under the shadow of his older brother, I.J. Singer, author of "The Brothers Ashkenazi" and a chronicler of ghetto life in a realistic fashion quite opposite to Isaac's wry and erotic mysticism.

Outgoing and far better known, I.J. was Isaac's devoted patron and protector; it was he who brought him to New York

and found work for him. He would show Isaac his manuscripts—all this comes from I.J.'s widow, whom Zim meets by chance—while the latter secreted his own. He also secreted any resentment he may have felt, but in a letter Isaac asserts that I.J.'s writing had deteriorated; as for himself, "My silence is better."

There are glimpses of Isaac in his Upper Broadway neighborhood, feeding the pigeons that would fly down. A policeman tells him to stop; the next day the policeman apologetically hands him a book to autograph. "If a New York policeman asks a Yiddish writer to sign his book there's still hope," Singer says.

Years later, though, during the 1967 war in Israel, Singer and Zim joined a line waiting to give money to the United Jewish Appeal. Some wept; it was not immediately clear whether Israel would survive. The world can not bear another Auschwitz, a rabbi standing in the line insisted. Zim writes: "My father, tugging at my sleeve, whispered: 'The world can bear anything.'"

Richard Eder is on the staff of the Los Angeles Times.

BRIDGE

By Alan Truscott

AUSTRALIAN Tim Seres has long been one of the best. His book, "Play Cards With Tim Seres," is available from The Bridge World (39 W. 94th St., N.Y., 10025, USA) for \$16.

Cover the East-West cards in the diagrammed deal, and plan the play in four spades. East opened with one diamond. West raised, then led the suit. You, as Seres, are South. What's next after you win with the diamond ace?

Your contract is optimistic, due to your aggressive intermediate jump overall of two spades. Even if you assume that the missing spades will fall well, you could lose two club tricks and two or more heart tricks. In view of his opening bid, East probably has the heart ace.

As the cards lie, the contract can be made against any defense. At the second trick Seres led a club from the dummy and played low from his hand when East played the ten. He won the trick, as West could not afford to overtake.

East shifted to a trump, and South took the ace and king and made another crucial play: a low club. East had to win with the

king and there was no defense. Whatever East played, South could win, cash the club ace and use dummy's trump entry to throw two hearts in two club winners.

It seems the defense could prevail if East shifted to the heart queen after winning the club ten. Not so. South can then win with the heart king, ruff a diamond, cash the club ace and lead a heart. East can take two heart tricks, but must concede a ruff and shift. South discards his last club and ruffs in the dummy to make his game.

NORTH (D)
♠ J87
♥ K83
♦ A9
♣ J7532

WEST
♠ Q6
♥ 742
♦ K876
♣ Q88

EAST
♠ 84
♥ A Q J 10
♦ Q J 5 8 2
♣ K 10

SOUTH
♠ A K 10 5 3 2
♥ Q 6 5
♦ 4
♣ A 6 4

Both sides were vulnerable. The bidding: North 1♠, East 2♠, South 3♠, West 4♠. Pass. Pass. Pass. Pass.

INTERNATIONAL

Israeli Says Talks Will Take 'Weeks'

Compiled by Our Staff From Despatches
JERUSALEM — Foreign Minister Ehud Barak of Israel cautioned Thursday against expecting peace talks with Syria to produce an immediate agreement.

"You have to expect that these talks will not provide rapid results and that difficulties will arise," he told Israeli radio as Israeli and Syrian negotiators began the second day of an initial three-day round of negotiations at a retreat in tide-water Maryland.

"I don't think the talks will provide results before several weeks," he said.

Earlier Thursday, the minister in charge of the peace process, Yossi Beilin, praised the "favorable" start to the new negotiations with Syria.

But Mr. Barak noted that "We still don't know if the Syrians intend to propose a real peace," insisting that if Damascus does not agree to "arrangements ensuring the security of Israel, there will not be any agreement."

The Israeli and Syrian negotiators are due to return home after the opening round and then gather again next week at the Wye Plantation on Maryland's Eastern Shore for a second three-day round.

The central issue in the negotiations is the return of the Golan Heights, which Israel seized during the 1967 war. Previous bilateral talks have broken down over the issue of security guarantees for Israel surrounding any return of the Golan, but the latest negotiations have broadened their focus to include normalization of economic and political relations, water-sharing and regional peace.

In Damascus, the official Al Thawra newspaper expressed optimism Thursday about the negotiations.

"The peace process now enjoys a good opportunity to bypass the state of standstill and impasse and to move toward the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace," the paper said.

But it added, "The final assessment of the talks is linked to the extent of Israel's compliance with Syria's legitimate demands and its readiness to commit itself to a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights."

Syria is showing unusual interest in concluding an agreement.

Foreign Minister Farouk Shara said in Damascus that he was optimistic about the renewed negotiations, and seven Arab foreign ministers met with him in the Syrian capital to discuss the process.

The Clinton administration is taking an active role, participating in all sessions.

"Our objective here is to try to provide them with a setting in which they can exercise as much flexibility as they need," said Glyn Davies, speaking for the State Department.

The outline of an accord is clear. Israel would give up the Golan Heights, from which it monitors Syrian tank movements and prevents cross-border shelling of villages in northern Israel. In exchange, Syria would sign a peace treaty with the Jewish state.

The 13,000 Israelis who live on the Golan may be uprooted. Also, enterprises developed there during Israel's 28-year occupation — industries, wineries and a ski resort — might have to be abandoned.

(AFP, AP)

At Breakfast in Bosnia: Police and a War Crimes Suspect

By Mike O'Connor
 New York Times Service

MEDJUGORJE, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Dario Kordic, indicted as a war criminal, accused of mass murder and supposedly in hiding from the United Nations war crimes tribunal, had breakfast Thursday morning at a hotel coffee shop a few meters away from a table full of European police officers sent to Bosnia to help re-establish a justice system.

The police did not seem to notice

Mr. Kordic as he ate rolls, drank coffee and made jokes with two companions. Nor had they done anything to have him detained during the previous several days when they had all been guests at the hotel. And neither had any of the hundreds of Bosnian police officers in this area.

When it was pointed out to the foreign officers that the man accused of organizing the murders of hundreds of Muslims and the "ethnic cleansing" of much of central Bosnia was getting in his car and about to

drive away, the officers said they knew little about the case and turned back to their meal.

That Mr. Kordic and at least two others of the five men accused of directing a pitiless sweep of Croatian forces against Muslim civilians 31 months ago are now living openly in this Croat-controlled part of Bosnia calls into question the sincerity of the government authorities who have promised to turn them over to justice.

Even more than that, according to diplomats and human rights workers

who are closely following this case, it implies that some in the international community, as well as senior Croatian politicians, are not eager to have the case pursued vigorously for fear of implicating senior members of the Croatian government and military.

Mr. Kordic was a leader of the Bosnian wing of President Franjo Tudjman's political party at the time of the crimes. The other indicted men were either officials of the party or officers in the Croatian militia, which was supplied and directed by the Croatian military, according to diplomats.

They all worked in central Bosnia when, according to UN officials, foreign diplomats and local officials, there was a campaign to drive Croats and Muslims there apart through propaganda and terror. In its indictment of the five men, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia said that hundreds were killed in a "widespread and systematic fashion" and that nearly the entire Muslim population was murdered or forced to flee.



A Bosnian soldier cycling along the confrontation line Thursday near Sarajevo's Serbian-held suburb of Ilidza.

Devastated Mostar Tries a Comeback

By Raymond Bonner
 New York Times Service

MOSTAR, Bosnia-Herzegovina — From the incomprehensible devastation wrought by relentless shelling a few years ago, the good life is poking through in eastern Mostar.

In early December, Sahadija Delalic opened a small boutique after laying polished Italian tiles on the floor of a building that had been demolished, like nearly every other building on the street. Levis and Italian shirts are displayed on glass shelves; a few winter parkas and an imitation fur coat — price, 400 Deutsche marks, the currency of choice here — hang on chrome-plated racks.

Around the corner, the ABC Sweets Shop reopened two days later. Situated in the old town of this city in central Bosnia, founded by the Turks 500 years ago, it was one of the most popular meeting places before shelling destroyed it during a war between the city's Muslim and Croatian factions that shattered the town's cosmopolitan civility.

The bright white exterior is in stark contrast to the dark buildings all around, and inside, it is light-green pastel, with mirrors along two walls and overhead recessed lights.

"We wanted to make it exactly like it was," said Nermina Ajaz.

Her obduracy disguises the fact that she spent nine frightful months in an underground shelter, during the bombardment, but she says that while much of east Mostar may have been crushed, the spirit needed to rebuild it was not.

"Divine," said a woman in western Mostar, her eyes sparkling when she heard that the ABC had reopened. "We bought all our birthday cakes there."

On the west side of the Neretva River, boutiques and coffee shops are commonplace among the tall apartment buildings, and at the Lasta restaurant, waiters in black tie pour \$90 bottles of French wine into crystal goblets. The west side is the modern, predominantly Croatian side of the city, and during the war — after uniting to hold off the Serbs, the Muslims and Croats turned their guns on each other — it was not as severely damaged.

Sitting at one of the five tables at the ABC a patron could think he was in Vienna, sipping espresso and selecting from an array of pastries baked by Mrs. Ajaz's husband and her oldest son. But looking outside, one sees a different, ghastly world.

"It is very sad to see the city like this," said Mirza Alilic, 64, sipping an espresso as he looked out on the destruction. He was born here but has lived most of his life in Sarajevo. Even the siege and destruction of that city had not prepared him for Mostar, which he had not visited since before the wars.

When the Austrians drove the Turks out of Mostar in the late 1800s, they tried to preserve some of the town's Turkish flavor.

On Masala Square, they built the Hotel Neretva and painted it in yellow and red pastels. Now the hotel, where people dined on a terrace restaurant basking over the Neretva's emerald waters, is a shell. So is the Turkish

bath, also built by the Austrians, across the street. And the long, two-story building next to it, which was a music conservatory before the recent wars.

So it is with a 400-year old mosque down the street, and many other buildings in east Mostar.

An early 20th-century Yugoslav poet, Aleksa Santic, wrote:

Such beauty! By the river and swanwhite, Mostar lies. Full of sunlight and treasures. Shimmering, it reaches upward with the spears of minarets. As if it wanted to soar up into the skies.

The reconstruction of Mostar's splendor and architectural heritage has not begun. Much more critical tasks take priority, like restoring water and electricity, rebuilding schools, putting glass in windows.

And reunifying the city politically so former friends can try to live together again.

"The opening of the bridges — the symbol of this town — has reunited old friends and given rise to optimism."

"Now, we hope that Mostar will rise from the ashes," said Marica Raspoljac, an architect and urban planner.

J. Meade Dies, British Economist

LONDON — James Meade, an economist who won a Nobel prize for pioneering research into international trade and played an influential role in British politics, died on Dec. 22 at his home in Cambridge, England. He was 88.

His family, which withheld announcement of the death until Wednesday, declined to specify the cause of death.

Mr. Meade, who was heavily influenced by the work of John Maynard Keynes, was best known for his work on trade and the international economy, for which he shared the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Science in 1977 with Bertil Ohlin of Sweden. His research analyzed how tax, spending and interest-rate policies affect trade, and how trade policies affect economic welfare.

Widely respected among economists for the quantitative rigor and detailed knowledge he brought to his work, he spent much of his life trying to apply the lessons of his sometimes arcane work to public policy.

Lynden G. Newland, 81, Jamaican Politician

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP) — Lynden G. Newland, 81, a journalist who helped found Jamaica's main opposition party and became the minister of labor and Kingston mayor, died Tuesday of pneumonia.

Mr. Newland helped found the Jamaica Labor Party in 1943 as a rival to the People's National Party, founded five years earlier. Since then, those two parties have dominated Jamaican politics.

DRUG: Thalidomide's Comeback

Continued from Page 1

should not be kept from those with the disease because of a tragedy 30 years ago.

"It's very generational," said Sally Cooper, executive director of the People With Aids Health Group, a Manhattan organization that helps sufferers acquire experimental drugs. "You talk to people who saw the pictures in Life magazine in 1962 and that's a very different response than someone who's 20 or 25. I think America's sort of over thalidomide."

From 1959 to 1962, thalidomide, a powerful sedative promoted as being so safe even pregnant women could use it, was one of the world's wonder drugs. Only the United States

refused to license it pending further research on side effects. Thus, of the estimated 10,000 thalidomide babies born in the early 1960s, only a handful were American, mostly the children of soldiers stationed in Germany, where it was widely prescribed.

Anecdotal evidence of its effectiveness on certain disorders was strong, said Dr. David Stirling of Celgene Corp., of Warren, New Jersey, that manufactures the drug. The other manufacturer of thalidomide, Andrius Pharmaceuticals Corp., is in Beltsville, Maryland.

"There had been a lot of anecdotal evidence, but it was mostly doctors giving it to 1 or 2 percent of patients as a last resort when other medications had failed," Dr. Stirling said.

BOSNIA: Successful So Far, U.S. Admiral Says

Continued from Page 1

General Ziller said at a news conference on the Vrbanja Bridge, one of the most bitterly contested areas of the city.

Admiral Smith however acknowledged that the first deadline was the easy part. Other, tougher deadlines are coming up — on Jan. 19 when Muslims, Serbs and Croats have to pull back four kilometers (2.5 miles) from the 600-mile confrontation line all over Bosnia, a few weeks later when the Serbian army has to withdraw completely from Sarajevo and on March 19 when the Muslim army will be able to move into those vacated positions.

The admiral took an upbeat position despite serious problems facing the U.S. military side of the operation. The planned deployment of 20,000 U.S. troops around the northeast Bosnian city of Tuzla has been hampered by bureaucracy, bad roads, poor rail service and floods.

The admiral hinted at impatience with the lack so far of moves by Carl Bildt, the chief international diplomat in Bosnia, to carry out the civilian and political sides of the deal.

Mr. Bildt's team has yet to move to Sarajevo. They only found office space last week.

Admiral Smith also laid out clear limits for his men. They will not be tasked, he said, with police duties like protecting civilians from random attacks from individuals. They will not

be ordered to stop one ethnic group from burning another group's houses. He said that he would direct his forces to "maintain as much order as we can" including the protection of important utility installations inside Serbian-held turf.

U.S. Suspends Sanctions

President Bill Clinton suspended broad economic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro on Thursday, but said that they could be imposed again if the terms of the Bosnia peace accord were violated. Reuters reported from Washington.

In a letter to Congress, Mr. Clinton said he had determined that the step was "necessary to achieve a negotiated settlement" to the Bosnian conflict.

Flood Halts Work on a Key Bridge

Washington Post Service

ZUPANJA, Croatia — More than 650 American soldiers, intent on building a key bridge to allow NATO forces to deploy into Bosnia, had to scramble from floodwaters Thursday morning as the swollen Sava River swept into three campsites and soaked dozens of troops.

The flooding derailed operations when it broke through levees and spilled over a 300-foot span of road and field prepared by U.S. Army engineers.

Troops banded high-hill waters as bulldozers carved out an escape route.

The flooding stopped work for the day, and Brigadier General James P. O'Neal, rear commander for the American deployment, indicated that alternative sites for the bridge were under consideration.

The bridge was to be the major inroad for the 20,000 U.S. troops scheduled to participate in the NATO mission. Another avenue was added Thursday: flights into Serbia.

NATO flew four C-17 transport planes into Belgrade airport with 12 vehicles and an advance party of 54 U.S. troops who were to go in convoy to the U.S. base in Tuzla, in northern Bosnia.

CELLAR: Faust's Bar Faces a Diabolical Demise

Continued from Page 1

the dark rooms that once echoed with drinking songs are now eerily silent.

On the evening when Faust and Mephisto entered Auerbach's Keller, they found students singing a song that began, "A rat lived in a cellar nest."

Many of the 74 employees who lost their jobs when the restaurant was abruptly shut in September believe that line could also describe what has happened to them.

"The place was packed every day and every night," said Ria Racz, who worked there as a waitress for 12 years. "Everything seemed to be running fine. Then one day, without any warning, we were told that it was closing. We still don't understand what happened."

In the years of Communist rule in East Germany, Auerbach's Keller, like nearly all bars and restaurants, was owned and run by the state. After Germany was unified in 1990, the Frankfurt-based real estate magnate Jürgen Schneider bought it along with several nearby buildings. He renovated the kitchen, bought new dishes and installed new furniture.

Then, one day early last year, the vast Schneider real estate empire came crashing down, destroyed by debts later calculated at about \$4 billion. Mr. Schneider disappeared, hiding from the police and his creditors for 13 months until being arrested in Florida. He and his wife are now in a Miami prison, fighting attempts to extradite them to Germany.

Embarrassed bankers who lent Mr. Schneider huge sums of money without ascertaining his financial condition are painstakingly dividing up his hundreds of properties. One of

Germany's largest banking conglomerates, Commerzbank AG, emerged this year as the new owner of Auerbach's Keller.

Although several potential buyers have expressed interest in Auerbach's Keller, no deal has been reached. Part of the problem is that a group of investors who were associated with Mr. Schneider assert that they hold the exclusive right to rent the restaurant for the next seven years. They are willing to sell that right for a good price, but Commerzbank's administrators are unwilling to pay.

NET: Germany Forces CompuServe to Censor Sex

Continued from Page 1

or use Microsoft Corp.'s new on-line service, CompuServe has about 500,000 European subscribers, making it the largest service on the continent.

Kathy Johnson, a spokeswoman for America Online, said the company's Virginia headquarters was not aware of any similar contact from German officials, although it too provides access to the Internet. America Online, which earlier in the day said it had passed the

4.5 million subscriber mark, is launching a European service based in Germany in a joint venture with Bertelsmann AG.

The growing popularity of the Internet, which is a series of protocols that allow computers all over the world to link with each other, has focused attention on the issue of pornography.

"This is the hazard of being at the forefront," Mr. Giles of CompuServe told Bloomberg Business News. "The legal system is something we will have to deal with as we go forward."

The company looked at all of the groups cited by German officials and decided that it found no grounds for suspending between 20 and 30 of those requested. Mr. Giles said.

CompuServe noted that it has no creative or editorial control over Internet materials to which it provides access.

The company is exploring technology that would enable Internet users the capability to tailor access based on the audience using the service, Mr. Giles said.

LUGAR: He's Smart, Statesmanlike and Very Far Back in the Field of Republican Presidential Contenders

Continued from Page 1

for the United States and Russia to pare their stockpile of nuclear weapons. He voted for this year's broadening of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and for the North American Free Trade Agreement. And he voted to send U.S. troops to Bosnia for the peacekeeping mission there, after scolding President Bill Clinton for not consulting Congress before deciding on it.

President Clinton must consult with Congress not just to mollify members," Mr. Lugar said, "but to sharpen the focus in defining the mission of U.S. troops in Bosnia. Maintaining peace and stability in Europe by ending the Balkan war is an important U.S. interest. American security and trade depend on our strong

relationship with a peaceful and stable Europe."

Richard Green Lugar radiates trustworthiness.

His is a style that has won him a fierce loyalty among the former staff aides who form the core of his presidential campaign organization.

His manner has also made him an enormous favorite with Indiana voters. In 1994, he became the first Indian to be elected to the Senate for four consecutive terms.

But cast alongside his Republican presidential rivals in the beam of the national spotlight, he appears insipid. "I wish that people were prepared to listen more and to accept more complex ideas," he said. "But this, the sound bite, is the nature of the competition, and I probably need to be better at it."

His personality and the issues he has chosen as the centerpiece of his campaign — foreign policy, terrorism and his proposal to replace the federal income tax with a 17 percent sales tax — mean that on the stump and in interviews alike, he is likely to lecture.

"I favor abolishing the federal income tax and all of the Internal Revenue Service apparatus which has grown to collect and enforce the income tax," Mr. Lugar tells listeners on the campaign trail. "Specifically, I propose to abolish completely the federal individual and corporate income taxes, capital gains taxes, gift taxes and inheritance taxes all at the same time — and, with them, all of the tax loopholes which have been created for special interests."

Mr. Lugar's idea of replacing this batch of federal taxes with a levy on

retail sales has drawn cheers from crowds but criticism from his opponents and a number of fiscal experts, who maintain that a tax dependent on vigorous retail sales would be too unreliable a source of government revenue.

Given his acknowledged shortcomings of style and his low standing in the polls, Mr. Lugar's prospects might seem daunting. But he and his strategists say they can see a way for him to win the Republican nomination.

Senator Dole, the front-runner, will be slowed either by the weight of incessant attacks from his rivals or by the kind of missteps that tripped him in two earlier runs for the White House. The more moderate Mr. Dole's supporters will then shift their allegiance to Mr. Lugar rather than to any of the remaining Republican contenders.

whom Mr. Lugar has described as "too dour, too draconian, too mean-spirited" to win the general election.

"There's what I would basically call an open seat for the presidency," Mr. Lugar said, "a situation where a candidate from the other party is crippled, President Clinton, and there is open competition on the Republican side."

But Mr. Lugar will have to overcome what even he concedes are long-shot odds and a commanding lead by Mr. Dole.

"Under the scenario for me to be an alternative to Senator Dole," Mr. Lugar said, "I have to have recognition that approaches him, and I have to achieve that. So ahead of me in the next eight weeks is an attempt to make certain that those people in those critical states know who I am."

Herald Tribune
 THE WORLD'S DAILY NEWSPAPER

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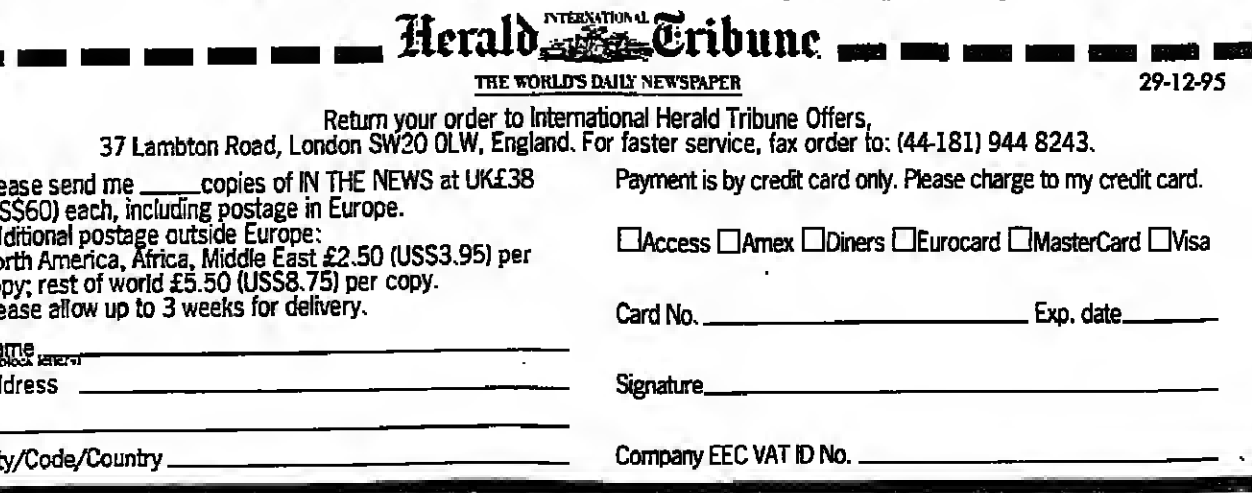
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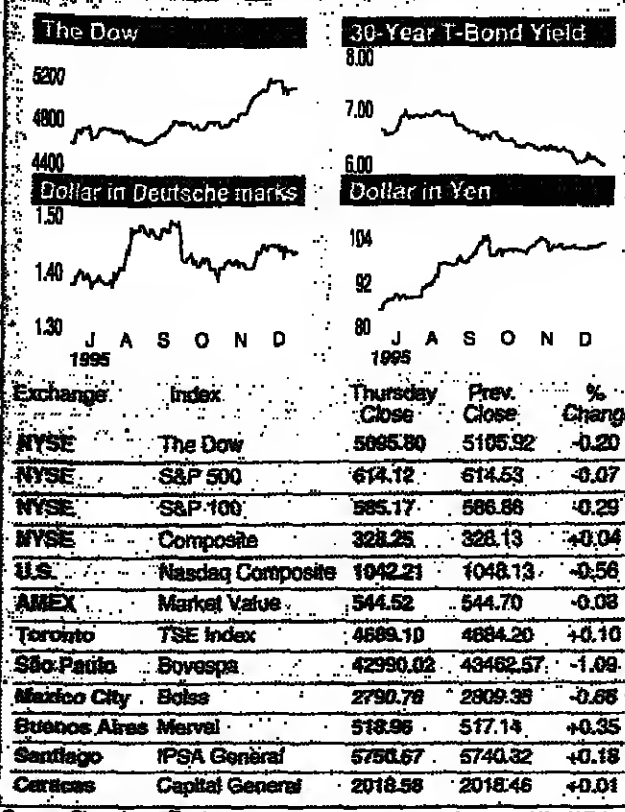
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THE AMERICAS

Investor's America



Very briefly:

Tenneco and Questar Scrap Deal

HOUSTON (AP) — Tenneco Energy's plan to sell its half interest in a western natural gas pipeline to Questar Corp. has been scrapped after federal regulators said to block the deal because of antitrust concerns.

Houston-based Tenneco, a unit of Tenneco Inc., had planned to sell its stake in Kern River Gas Transmission Co., which runs a pipeline from Wyoming to California, to Salt Lake City-based Questar for \$225 million.

But the Federal Trade Commission filed a lawsuit contending that the planned sale would substantially reduce competition that benefited industrial customers in Utah. Tenneco and Questar's pipeline subsidiary said the companies jointly decided to scrap the deal as a result. The FTC then withdrew its lawsuit in Salt Lake City federal court.

Congressional leaders have unexpectedly decided to drop a planned liberalization of rules that restrict foreign ownership of local and long-distance phone companies. U.S. law now limits foreign investors to 25 percent ownership of phone companies as well as television and radio stations.

Moody's Investors Service Inc. predicted that the value of new bonds issued by U.S. corporations could top \$165 billion in 1996, up from \$155 billion in 1995, as companies pay for a record \$66 billion in maturing debt and refinance high-cost debt issued earlier.

Ontario Hydro of Canada and AES Corp. of the United States have made a joint offer of \$4 billion for the operation and maintenance of the Yacyreté hydroelectric dam owned by Argentina and Paraguay.

AFP, Bloomberg, Knight-Ridder, Reuters

Trendy L.A. Investment Firm Folds

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — Reeling from what appears to have been an ill-advised bet on the direction of interest rates, the prominent Beverly Hills money manager S. Jay Goldinger has shut down his investment consulting firm and liquidated the accounts of his clients amid losses of at least \$36 million, sources say.

Mr. Goldinger's firm, Capital Insight Inc., was at the heart of disclosures this month by two publicly traded companies, Pier 1 Imports and PairGain Technologies Inc., that unauthorized trading by a financial consultant cost them millions of dollars in losses.

Neither company disclosed the name of the investment firm it blamed for the losses. But Mr. Goldinger's attorney, Brian O'Neill, has confirmed that both corporations were alluding to Capital Insight.

Mr. O'Neill declined comment on other matters, including the causes of the loss.

Mr. Goldinger, 42, assiduously promoted himself as a millionaire bond-investment guru through three syndicated newspaper columns, appearances on television, and a guidebook published by Barron's advising small investors how to invest in government securities. Although he is usually eager to be quoted on bond-market developments, he is currently unavailable for comment.

Meanwhile, investors and others with knowledge of the case said Mr. Goldinger's trading losses extended well beyond the two companies and may have affected a large proportion, if not all, of his other clients. The size of the assets under Capital Insight's management could not be learned Wednesday, but sources estimated his clientele at 30 to 45 individuals and corporations.

Sources also confirmed that Mr.

Goldinger's activities are under investigation by the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. A spokesman for the SEC refused to confirm or deny involvement and CFTC representatives were not available for comment.

Mr. Goldinger has long been a beneficiary of positive publicity as an investor "wunderkind." Having grown up the son of a textile executive, he would regale interviewers with stories of having the Wall Street Journal delivered to his summer camp cabin at age 9 and of keeping his net worth marked on a bulletin board in his bedroom at 13.

For several years he purchased season tickets to games of each of the major league baseball teams — at an annual cost of more than \$100,000 — and donated them for use by underprivileged children.

CBS Dismisses Head of News Operation

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Eric Ober, who headed CBS News for five stormy years, is leaving the network, a CBS News spokeswoman said Thursday.

In an internal memo issued Thursday morning, Mr. Ober, who has been with the network for three decades, told colleagues that the president of CBS, Peter Lunder, "has decided to make a change in the presidency of CBS News." Mr. Ober's memo said he was leaving Jan. 12.

Neither Mr. Ober nor other CBS ex-

ecutives were available for comment. However, the dismissal was confirmed by Sandy Geniuss, the spokeswoman. She said no successor had been named.

Andrew Heyward, producer of "The CBS Evening News," is widely considered by CBS News insiders as the front-runner to be Mr. Ober's replacement.

Mr. Ober's departure had been expected for months, as CBS News reeled from plunging morale and ratings, as well as from CBS's transition to new ownership by Westinghouse Electric Corp.

When Westinghouse announced its new CBS management team a month ago, some observers were surprised that Mr. Ober remained.

Mr. Ober joined CBS in 1966 and spent the next three decades both in and out of the network's news operations. He rose to the head of the News division in August 1990. His tenure as president was marked by the poor ratings of the flagship "Evening News" and by the pairing of Connie Chung with Dan Rather in a raucous two-year co-anchorship.

Dollar Climbs on Hopes for Budget Deal

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

NEW YORK — The dollar was mostly higher against other major currencies Thursday amid optimism that the White House and Congress would agree on a budget plan.

The two sides have so far been unable to agree on a plan to erase the deficit, which totaled \$164 billion in the year ended Sept. 30. The dispute has led to a partial government shutdown, which entered its 13th day Thursday.

"I think the dollar will respond positively to progress on the budget, which will hopefully come tomorrow," said Karl Halligan, a trader at CIBC Bank New York.

The dollar also benefited from rising

U.S. bond prices, with yields hovering at the lowest levels in more than two years. Bond traders also were optimistic about the budget talks, and the benchmark 30-year

yield fell below 6 percent.

"There's euphoria with the long bond yield below 6 percent," said Jay Wertheimer, senior currency trader at Banco di Sicilia in New York. Higher bond prices help the dollar because foreign investors generally must first purchase dollars to acquire U.S. assets.

The dollar closed at 1.4385 Deutsche marks, up from 1.4345 DM Wednesday,

but at 102.600 yen, down from 102.825 yen. The dollar also closed at 1.1555 Swiss francs, down from 1.1575 francs, and 4.9210 French francs, up from 4.9015 francs.

The pound fell to \$1.5475 from \$1.5590.

Traders said the dollar could rise beyond 103.00 yen and 1.4500 DM next week if President Bill Clinton and Congress agree to a budget plan Friday.

Mr. Clinton is scheduled to meet Friday with Newt Gingrich, the House speaker, and Bob Dole, the Senate majority leader.

But the dollar could fall below 101.50 yen and 1.4200 DM if the talks break up with no signs of progress, they said.

(Bloomberg, Reuters)

Cirrus Clouds Stocks With Profit Outlook

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

NEW YORK — A weak profit forecast from a computer-maker pushed stock indexes moderately lower Thursday despite a fall in 30-year bond yields to less than 6 percent.

Cirrus Logic's stock tumbled and pressured the rest of the

U.S. STOCKS

computer industry on Thursday after it trimmed its earnings estimate for the second time in two months.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell 10.12 points, to 5,065.80, while the Nasdaq Composite index, which comprises many technology stocks, slid 5.92, to 1,042.21.

Despite the fall in the Dow industrials, advancing issues outnumbered declining ones on the New York Stock Exchange by a 6-to-5 ratio.

The fall in 30-year bond yields to 5.98 percent from 6.01 percent was insufficient to overcome wariness in the stock market. Although declining interest rates often push equity prices higher, the falling yields suggested a weakening economy would put pressure on corporate earnings.

Larry Rice, chief investment officer at Josephthal, Lyon & Ross, said: "The real trend continues to be the impressive performance of the bond market, and that's what's a little bit alarming here. You can't have yields go down and stocks go higher, past a certain point."

A report early Thursday from the Conference Board appeared to reinforce this concern. The business group said that help-wanted advertising in newspapers fell in November because of employer concern about future economic weakness.

Weak demand for computer modems was behind the sharp drop in Cirrus Logic's shares. The stock, which led the Nasdaq most actively, finished 7 lower at 19 1/4. Analysts had been expecting it to earn about 46 cents a share in its third quarter, which ends Dec. 31.

Other retailers weakened: Home Depot fell 3/4 to 47 1/4, and Toys 'R Us dropped 1/4 to 22.

but the company said it would only have profit of about 13 cents a share, down from 19 cents a year earlier.

"It just brings up more concern, especially for some people who had concerns about PC demand overall," said Graham Y. Tanaka, president of Tanaka Capital Management.

Reflecting those worries, leading technology issues tumbled. Microsoft fell 1 1/4 to 87 1/4, IBM dropped 1 1/4 to 90 1/4, Oracle slid 1 1/4 to 42 1/4, and Apple Computer fell 3/4 to 32.

Bay Networks fell 1/4 to 41 1/4 before its inclusion in the Standard & Poor's 500-stock index next month. Bay will replace Capital Cities/ABC after the media conglomerate's takeover by Disney.

Oil-related stocks continued to rise along with petroleum prices. Cold weather in the U.S. Northeast and in Europe has caused an increase in oil prices. Exxon rose 1/4 to 82 1/4, Amoco finished 1 1/4 higher, at 72 1/4, while Texaco increased 3/4 to 78 1/4.

Stock in EchoStar Communications rose 3/4 to 24 after the maker of satellite television products announced the successful launch of its first direct-broadcast satellite.

Philip Morris shares fell 1/4 to 89 1/4 after a newspaper reported that cigarette makers will face new rules restricting their advertising and marketing practices.

Stock in Abbott Laboratories rose 1 to 41 1/4. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved Wednesday the marketing of Abbott's Biacillin drug to prevent life-threatening bacterial infections in AIDS patients.

Shares of Michaels Stores fell 1/4 to 14 1/4 after the company said it would report net income in the quarter ended Jan. 31 "significantly lower" than a year ago. The company blamed the use of promotions during the Christmas season for the drop.

Other retailers weakened: Home Depot fell 3/4 to 47 1/4, and Toys 'R Us dropped 1/4 to 22. (Bloomberg, AP)

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

Thursday, Dec. 28

Prices in local currencies

Telekurs

High Low Close Prev.

Amsterdam

ABN-AMRO 72.30 72.30 72.30 72.30

Alcoa 71.90 71.90 71.90 71.90

Amstel 69.20 69.20 69.20 69.20

Anglo 188.50 188.50 188.50 188.50

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ASIA/PACIFIC

China to Cut Import Tariffs

35% Slash Should Enhance WTO Bid

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

SHANGHAI — China said Thursday it would cut its average import tariff rate to 23 percent — a reduction of 35 percent — beginning on April 1. The move, which would put pressure on thousands of uncompetitive state companies, was seen as a major step in China's drive to enter the World Trade Organization, the agency that oversees global commerce.

The decision, announced in a brief dispatch by the official Xinhua news agency, confirmed intentions voiced by President Jiang Zemin and other senior Chinese leaders in November.

Since Mr. Jiang's comments, the business community has been eager for more details of the cuts, which are expected to bolster China's imports and slash its surging trade surplus in 1995. In the first 11 months of 1995, China posted a surplus of \$17.9 billion.

"Chinese exporters welcome the cuts, which should reduce the costs of production, but many state companies oppose them because they fear increased competition," said a Western diplomat who insisted on anonymity. "For this reason, there has been much debate over which items will be included and how much the cuts will be."

Beijing was anxious to join the WTO at its launching on Jan. 1, 1995, but failed because of objections by member states over its protectionism, inadequate protection of intellectual property rights and other issues.

The official People's Daily said Thursday that conditions were ripe for China to join the WTO and that its entry was just a matter of time. "We want to speed up the pace of negotiations but do not want to rush them," it said. "The pace of negotiations should follow their natural course."

The diplomat said it was impossible to put a date on when China would join, with many detailed issues still to be resolved.

The tariff cut, which would be the largest ever by China, would probably hurt earnings at companies now protected by tariffs that average 36 percent, analysts said.

China has not published a list of which duties it plans to cut, but has said the reductions would affect more than 4,000 of about 6,000 possible items. "The big unknown is still unknown," said Kalina Ip, an analyst at HG Asia Ltd., in reference to the final list. "The government wants to make the impact minimal on Chinese companies, yet meaningful enough to help the WTO bid."

Consumer products were most likely to be affected by change, since they carry high tariffs and are not regarded as key industries by the Chinese government, analysts said.

Chinese stock markets have shown which companies investors believe will be challenged by the tariff cuts. A case in point is Shanghai Haixin Co., which makes plush used by Chinese toy exporters. Haixin B shares, available to foreign investors, have fallen by more than 40 percent in the past month.

Shares of Shanghai Shangling Electrical Co., the country's third-largest refrigerator manufacturer, have slid 21 percent since Mr. Jiang announced the planned tariff cut.

A tariff reduction works both ways, one analyst said, since lower prices for imported raw materials would cut production costs at companies such as China Pharmaceutical Co., a vitamin C producer whose shares are traded in Hong Kong. (Reuters, Bloomberg)

Newspaper War

Claims Another Hong Kong Victim

By Kevin Murphy
International Herald Tribune

HONG KONG — A bitter circulation battle between Hong Kong's leading Chinese-language newspapers, Apple Daily and Oriental Daily News, were not likely to end soon.

"It's hard to tell how long they want to go on like this," an analyst said of the deep-pocketed Oriental Press Group's attack on Apple Daily, which is owned by the clothes retailer turned publisher Jimmy Lai.

"I think it has become a personal vendetta," added the analyst, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. "They want to break Jimmy Lai's back."

Launched in June, Mr. Lai's Apple Daily has quickly gained a strong following in the mass-market sector of Hong Kong's already crowded newspaper landscape. Many of Apple Daily's new readers have come over from the top-selling Oriental Daily News. The competition mirrors that between the two rival groups' English-language news and entertainment magazines.

To protect its circulation lead, Oriental Daily recently cut its cover price to 2 dollars from 5 dollars, forcing several competitors to follow suit.

"The newspapers targeting a more upmarket audience will probably remain unaffected by these moves," a media analyst at a local brokerage said. "But other mass-market papers are going to have a tough time."

Oriental Daily is believed to have gained many new readers. But Apple Daily, while admitting that its own circulation has been hurt, has only dropped its price from 5 dollars to 4 dollars. But it has pledged to keep it at least that low until Hong Kong's return to Chinese rule in July 1997.

The local industry could not have chosen a worse time to go to war, analysts said, adding that the hostilities sparked by rivalry between two mass-circulation newspapers, Apple Daily and Oriental Daily News, were not likely to end soon.

Two publishers also reported declines in half-year profit. Culturecom Holdings Ltd. said Thursday it would close its Huanan Jingji Journal, an unprofitable financial newspaper that reported on business in southern China. It said it would concentrate on running the more established Tin Tin Daily News.

Two other publications, Express News and United Daily News, have shut down within the past two weeks, putting more than 500 people out of work.

Oriental Press Group Ltd., one of the largest companies in the no-holds-barred circulation contest, said Thursday that its net profit for the six-month period to Sept. 30 fell 36 percent from a year ago, to 138.2 million Hong Kong dollars (\$17.8 million).

Under pressure from falling advertising revenue, the high costs of newspaper production and now a price war, Oriental Press Group also slashed its dividend to 3 cents a share from 10 cents a year earlier.

Culturecom, meanwhile, said its half-year net profit plunged 66 percent, to 7.2 million dollars.

On Wednesday, Ming Pao Enterprise Corp., publisher of the Ming Pao Daily, reported a 40 percent drop in half-year profit, to 53.9 million dollars, citing higher newspaper costs and increased competition.

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S&P Deals

Fresh Blow To Japan

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

TOKYO — Japan's beleaguered banking sector got another blow Thursday, with the credit rating of one major bank cut and two others given a negative outlook.

Standard & Poor's Corp. said it was downgrading Fuji Bank Ltd. and its related entities and changed the outlook for Industrial Bank of Japan Ltd. and Sakura Bank Ltd. from stable to negative.

It cited the severity of problems in the Japanese banking sector and the possible adverse impact of large problem loan holdings for the action.

Only last week, Standard & Poor's lowered the credit ratings of Mitsubishi Bank Ltd., Sanwa Bank Ltd., Dai-ichi Kangyo Bank Ltd. and Sumitomo Bank Ltd., blaming bad debt.

Fuji Bank's long-term rating was lowered to A minus from A plus to "reflect the bank's large problem loans in relation to its capital strength to absorb future losses from those," S & P said.

Japan's banking industry is struggling under the weight of billions of dollars in bad loans made during the country's booming economy in the 1980s. The government announced a plan last week to bail out seven Japanese mortgage lenders, many affiliated with larger banks, using \$6.85 billion in public money.

Concern about Japan's banks pulled the stock market lower Thursday. The Nikkei index of 225 shares fell 138.63 points, or 0.66 percent, to 19,873.13. Daiwa Bank, Asahi Bank and Nippon Credit Bank were among the losers.

"They're still saddled with a huge amount of problem loans, the real estate market is declining and the economy is in a depressed state with no sign of recovery," said Shinano Mori, a banking analyst for S & P.

Adding to the problems faced by Japanese banks is a higher cost of funds as overseas banks add a risk premium to loans made to Japan, analysts said. (AFP, Bloomberg)

Investor's Asia

Exchange	Index	Thursday Close	Prev. Close	% Change
Hong Kong	Hang Seng	9,998.17	9,985.23	+0.13
Singapore	Straits Times	2,254.19	2,271.35	-0.76
Sydney	All Ordinances	2,200.00	2,201.10	-0.05
Tokyo	Nikkei 225	19,873.13	20,011.76	-0.69
Kuala Lumpur	Composite	993.93	984.12	+1.00
Bangkok	SET	1,271.00	1,279.14	-0.64
Seoul	Composite Index	Closed	882.94	-
Taipei	Stock Market Index	5,108.18	5,071.55	+0.72
Manila	PSE	2,558.07	2,533.38	+0.97
Jakarta	Composite Index	513.85	512.87	+0.19
Wellington	NZSE-40	2,138.39	2,136.17	+0.15
Bombay	Sensitive Index	Closed	3,110.49	-

Source: Telekurs

International Herald Tribune

Very briefly:

• Nissan Motor Co. of Japan plans to expand strategic ties with Samsung Motor Inc. of South Korea to sell cars in each other's markets and cooperate in other Asian markets. Nissan also plans to raise motor vehicle production in Mexico to 140,000 units in 1996 from an estimated 100,000 units in 1995.

• Nippon Credit Bank Ltd. estimated that Japan's domestic sales of passenger cars, excluding so-called mini cars, are likely to rise 4.6 percent in 1996 from 1995, to 3.7 million units.

• Japanese carmakers bought \$10.33 billion worth of U.S. parts in the six months to Sept. 30, up 8.3 percent from a year ago.

• China has launched a satellite owned by U.S.-based EchoStar Communications Corp.; the 3.29 ton satellite, built by Lockheed Martin Corp., will be used mainly for relaying TV programs in North America.

• Hong Kong's retail sales rose 3 percent in October from a year ago, to 17.7 billion Hong Kong dollars (\$2.29 billion), but the value of October motor-vehicle sales fell 35 percent.

• Tai Cheung Holdings Ltd., a property developer, said net profit fell 88 percent, to 49.50 million Hong Kong dollars, in the half-year to Sept. 30 as sales fell 85 percent, to 83.2 million dollars.

• Shanghai New Asia (Group) Co. opened the city's first Jack-in-the-Box restaurant in a venture with U.S. franchisee Investment Co.; the company has opened eight Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets in 1995. (AFP, Bloomberg, Knight-Ridder, Reuters)

Asian Phone Mobility Expands

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

SINGAPORE — A four-nation consortium on Thursday launched a mobile phone project that aims to allow users to make calls from almost any corner of Asia.

The Asia Pacific Mobile Telecommunications Satellite Ltd. project will be capable of reaching subscribers across Asia from Pakistan in the west to Japan and Indonesia in the east, the head of satellite development at Singapore Telecommunications Ltd., Ho Siaw Hong, said.

The latest project joins other rival systems under development by PT Asia Cellular Satellite System and Afro-Asian Satellite Communications Pte. Current cellular services in Asia are limited to cities, towns and areas close to them.

Mr. Ho said the project, which would begin with six participants from China and Singapore and would later include companies from Thailand and Japan, would involve an initial investment of up to \$800 million.

The initial project, which is expected to begin service in 1998, will use a satellite system and a network of ground-based gateways to provide telephone, fax and data transmission.

The venture will be managed by Asia Pacific Mobile Telecommunications Satellite of Singapore. One-third of the company is shared equally by Singapore Telecom, the country's phone monopoly, and Singapore Technologies Ltd., a government-linked property and development company.

The other two-thirds of the project are held by four Chinese companies: China Satellite Launch & Tracking Control General, a Chinese government-held satellite company; China Aero-Space Corp., a state-owned missile builder, and two companies involved in satellite manufacturing and design — China Union Satellite Telecommunication Co. and China Telecommunications Broadcast Satellite Corp. (AP, Bloomberg, Reuters)

A High-Tech Camera Lowers Its Sights

Reuters

TOKYO — Once prohibitively expensive and used only for professional work, the digital still camera is enjoying increased demand from ordinary consumers as electronics makers join camera manufacturers to introduce more affordable models.

A digital camera uses a memory chip or card to record images, eliminating the need for film replacement and development.

It has various functions in addition to taking photographs, such as the direct input of pictures into a personal computer and the replay of stored images on a television screen.

The recent personal computer boom has stimulated consumer demand for digital cameras, now seen as a key computer accessory, and companies are meeting the demand with products priced far below earlier models.

Enthusiasm for the digital camera was ignited by the Japanese calculator maker, Casio Computer Co., which had little experience in camera production before it introduced its first model, the QV-10, in March for 65,000 yen (\$634). The QV-10, as small and light as an analog compact camera, uses a 16-megabit flash memory chip as a storage medium and records up to 96 color pictures. Users can erase unwanted images from the camera's memory at the push of a button. They can check the quality of pictures immediately after they are taken by replaying them on a built-in liquid-crystal display panel that doubles as a viewfinder. Recorded images can be printed out by connecting the camera to a video printer.

Camera makers selling professional-use digital cameras for more than 1 million yen have reacted coolly to the debut of the QV-10, predicting that consumers would ignore the product because of the poor quality of pictures.

To bring down the camera's price, Casio lowered the quality of the image to 250,000 pixels. Professional digital cameras have a resolution of several million pixels. "Digital cameras offered by major camera makers were too expensive for consumers to buy," said Koichi Nishizawa, a Casio spokesman. "So we decided to realize a low-priced model even though we had to sacrifice picture quality."

Casio's strategy has been welcomed by consumers. The company started production at a rate of 3,000 units a month. Volume is expected to reach 30,000 units a month in early 1996. Casio also hopes to increase production volume to 90,000 units a month by the middle of 1996, as it begins marketing two more models.

Surprised by Casio's success, other electronics and camera makers have rushed to introduce comparable cameras to the market.

Toshiba Corp., Olympus Optical Co., Ricoh Co., Fuji Photo Film Co., Chicon Industries Inc. and Rhythm Watch Co. have all launched cut-price models. Apple Computer Inc. and Eastman Kodak Co. of the United States also have entered the market.

Canon Inc., one of the world's largest camera makers, plans to introduce its first consumer-use digital still camera in the spring, while Sharp Corp., a leading maker of digital camcorders, is considering launching a digital still camera around mid-1996.

Sanyo Electric Co. has started production of digital still cameras for sale in the United States under the brand name of a U.S. maker of PC peripheral equipment. But Sanyo has not disclosed the name of the U.S. company.

Prime Minister Li Peng that the building was too tall.

Mr. Zhang blamed the delay on the disgraced former Beijing Communist Party chief, Chen Xitong, saying Mr. Chen had approved the project without informing the central government. Mr. Chen was removed from office in April.

"If it were me I would have approved it long ago," Mr. Zhang said of the project. (Bloomberg, Reuters)

On March 11th, the IHT will publish a Sponsored Section on

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The Associated Press.

[illegible]**NYSE**

Thursday's 4 p.m. Close
(Continued)

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WORLD ROUNDUP

Tampa Fires Wyche

FOOTBALL Sam Wyche, who led Tampa Bay to its most successful season since 1981 but still couldn't produce a winning record, was fired after four years with the Buccaneers.

The Bucs lost seven of their last nine games, following a 5-2 start, and finished 7-9 for their 13th straight losing season. Wyche, who had a year remaining on his contract, was 23-41 with the Bucs and has a career mark of 87-109 in 12 NFL seasons. (AP)

Newcastle's March Halted

SOCCER Manchester United, in second place, defeated Newcastle United, the English Premier League leader, with a deserved 2-0 victory at Old Trafford. Andy Cole, playing against his old club, gave Manchester the lead and Roy Keane added the second goal. Newcastle now leads Manchester by seven points. (Reuters)

Yankees Acquire Raines

BASEBALL Tim Lincecum, a 36-year-old outfielder who was once a premier base-stealing threat, joined the New York Yankees from the Chicago White Sox in exchange for future considerations.

Raines, who is signed for next season at \$3.7 million, will agree to a one-year extension through 1997 with a club option for 1998.

Ron Gant is guaranteed \$25 million over five years by the St. Louis Cardinals. The 30-year-old outfielder will get \$5 million in each of the next five seasons.

St. Louis has also agreed an \$8.1 million, two-year contract with pitcher Andy Benes. (AP)

Syracuse Upsets Illinois

BASKETBALL Syracuse, ranked No. 13, beat No. 12 Illinois, 75-64, in the first round of the Rainbow Classic in Honolulu. Syracuse, which will face Rhode Island in the semifinals Friday night, improved to 10-0, while the Illini dropped to 9-1. (AP)

Sunny Picture for Bettors

HORSE RACING With British horse racing waning for the third day in a row because of frozen courses, the bookmakers beamed in live pictures of a meet in South Africa on Thursday to keep the bets flowing.

"It's called bad weather insurance racing," said Paul Austin, a spokesman for Ladbrokes, one of the bookmakers showing South African races.

"The pictures from the meet at Vaal come into the betting shops and the punters escape the freezing cold to watch racing in sun-drenched conditions in South Africa." (AP)

Cornhuskers Plough Field

FOOTBALL An Arizona junior college football field renovated by the National Football League at a cost of nearly \$70,000 as a practice site for the Super Bowl has been used by the University of Nebraska in training for the Fiesta Bowl, and may be damaged beyond repair.

Nebraska, playing in the Fiesta Bowl on Jan. 2, picked Scottsdale Community College as a practice site. The NFL did not expect the field to be used until the pros arrive for the Super Bowl on Jan. 28 in nearby Tempe.

"You throw 140 kids on it, you kill," Jim Steeg of the NFL said.

"Gee, a football field is supposed to be used," said Art Becker, Scottsdale's athletic director. (AP)

The Year of Ripken, Bosman and Nelson Mandela

By Ian Thomson

International Herald Tribune

THERE MAY have been no soccer World Cup and no Olympics in 1995; there was, however, a World Series, the World Athletics Championships, a Ryder Cup and much more besides.

Some events were of a somber hue. It was the year Mickey Mantle died. Admittedly, he had been drinking himself to death for decades. The young Russian pairs skater Sergei Grinkov, who appeared to be in the best health, was struck down by heart disease. Several boxers were killed by their sport, and countless others suffered brain damage.

BASKETBALL Hakeem Olajuwon led the Houston Rockets to their second successive National Basketball Association championship.

Arvidas Sabonis led Real Madrid to the European Championship for clubs, then jumping (as best he could) to the NBA home for hobbled centers, the Portland Trail Blazers (see: Bill Walton, Sam Bowie).

Yugoslavia completed its return to international basketball by winning the European Championship in Greece. No North American would have believed what has become of their game. The Greek fans accused Boris Stankovic, the Serbian general secretary of the international federation, of rigging the tournament on behalf of Yugoslavia. The third-place Croats marched off the victory stand when the Yugoslavs appeared to collect their gold medals. The Lithuanians momentarily refused to return to the court for the last minutes of the final. Basketball really is starting to catch up with soccer.

1996 Predictions Panathinaikos of Athens, coached by Bozidar Malkovic, becomes the first Greek club to win the European Championship at Paris in April.

The Chicago Bulls win the NBA title in Michael Jordan's first full season after almost two years of "retirement." It will also be the last one for Jordan, who turns 33 in February.

SOCCER Brazil couldn't follow its 1994 World Cup victory, losing the Copa America final in a penalty shoot-out to host Uruguay, 5-3. The South American championship saw the year's biggest upset when Argentina finished second in its group because of a 3-0 beating by the U.S.

The news was bigger in the backrooms and courtrooms. Jean-Benoit Bosman, a 31-year-old former Belgian youth star, won his case against the European soccer transfer system when the European Court of Justice ruled in December that clubs could not retain rights to their players after their contracts had run out. Furthermore, the

court ruled illegal the current restrictions on the number of foreign players to play for each club. The ruling threatened to create American-style free agency and a greater voice for players in the administration of the game—if, that is, the players choose to seize the chance.

Eric Cantona, the Manchester United France striker, was suspended, fined and threatened with jail for attacking a foul-mouthed supporter in the stands. George Graham was fired as manager by Arsenal, one of England's leading clubs, for accepting \$430,000 under the table from an agent.

In the most ominous incident of all, a friendly in Ireland was stopped in the first half when English hooligans began pelting the field and other supporters with bottles, chairs and anything they could tear loose from the stands. This was taken as a warning for the 1996 European Championship, the 16-team tournament that will be the biggest event held in England since the 1966 World Cup.

Ajax Amsterdam beat AC Milan, 1-0, to win the European Cup—the goal coming from Patrick Kluivert, the 19-year-old who scored both goals against Ireland in November to give the Dutch national team a place in the European championship.

1996: Ajax takes the European Cup again, but the national team founders a month later in the European championship. Indeed, while young, fashionable picks such as the Netherlands, Portugal and Croatia receive much backing, the tournament is won by Italy.

SKIING Alberto Tomba enjoyed his greatest non-Olympic season, winning seven slaloms in a row to seize his first World Cup overall title despite spurring the downhill and Super-G events. The World Championships were postponed until next year because of a snow-drought at Sierra Nevada, Spain, the southernmost major ski area in Europe.

1996: Tomba fails to win a gold medal at the World Championships, the only major championship to have eluded him.

ICE HOCKEY The National Hockey League and the international federation announced plans to include NHL stars in the 1998 Winter Olympics at Nagano, Japan, and to turn the Canada Cup into a World Cup, starting in August 1996, with one-third of the tournament to be played in Europe. The question for hockey is whether the six key national teams from Europe and North America will all play in the same style, since their key players are coming from the NHL.

The Stanley Cup crossed the Hudson, passing from the New York Rangers to the New Jersey Devils, who immediately threatened to go to Nashville.

SKATING Surya Bonaly of France finished second in the World Championships, and Tonya Harding had her breasts enlarged.

1996: Bonaly finishes second and Harding has her breasts enlarged.

CYCLING Miguel Indurain won his fifth straight Tour de France after the race suffers its third fatal casualty in 93 years. Fabio Casartelli, a 24-year-old Italian, died after an accident descending a mountain.

1996: Indurain becomes the first man to win six Tours de France.

CHINA The country is a subject by itself. It dominated the world diving cup, but its female runners and swimmers were largely absent from important events. Seven Chinese swimmers, including two world champions, tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs.

1996: In Atlanta, the Chinese runners become fascinated by American daytime talk shows. They realize what they have been missing in Ma Junre's army of runners.

ATHLETICS As usual, Noureddine Morceli of Algeria lowered his own world record in the 1,500-meter run. But the greatest performances came from Haile Gebrselassie, the 23-year-old Ethiopian who lowered the 10,000-meter world record by almost nine seconds, and beat the



Cal Ripken Jr. broke Lou Gehrig's record for consecutive games played.

5,000-meter world record by 10.35 seconds—the biggest change since 1942.

Gwen Torrence of the U.S. lost her sweep of three gold medals at the World Championships in Gothenburg when she ran out of her lane.

Michael Johnson of the United States won three gold medals, including the 200 and 400 meters, an historic double. Jonathan Edwards of Britain twice broke the world record in the men's triple jump. Inessa Kravits of the Ukraine set a world record in the women's triple jump, as did Kim Batten of the United States in the women's 400-meter hurdles. Primo Nebiolo, president of the IAAF, the international federation, was accused by his former press chief of fixing the votes for the 1994 athletes of the year. No one was very much surprised.

1996: Nebiolo orders that the clocks be slowed ever so slightly to ensure a spate of world records at the Olympics. The effort is revealed, however, when the 100-meter champion, Linford Christie of Britain, is clocked in a world-record time of 1.72 seconds. No one is very much surprised.

FOOTBALL The San Francisco 49ers won a record fifth Super Bowl.

Northwestern University, one of the worst college football teams of all time, rises up to beat Notre Dame, Michigan and Penn State, winning the Big Ten conference and an invitation to the Rose Bowl on Jan. 1 against Southern California.

1996: A college association investigation of Northwestern follows vague reports that the program has been funded secretly by a fan known only as "The Bald Italian." Several key players refuse to explain their possession of Mercedes registered to wom-

en runners from China.

BASEBALL The strike by players dissolved in time to start the season when a U.S. District Court judge ruled that the owners were idiots and the players were spoiled brats, or something like that. Then they all tried to take credit from Cal Ripken Jr.'s phenomenal, 13-year marathon that broke Lou Gehrig's of 2,130 consecutive games played.

The Atlanta Braves won the postseason Series.

FANS OF other sports who worry how TV money will ultimately affect their personal relationship with soccer, basketball, etc. should study baseball. The sport is completely wedded to the statistics of finance. The players and owners agree only that the game is actually a television show, and that the ticket-buyers are actually the studio audience for the TV show. Baseball can put up with booing in the stands so long as the TV ratings stay up.

1996: Who cares?

TENNIS Andre Agassi beat Pete Sampras at the beginning of the year. Sampras beat Agassi at the end of the year, then heroically led the U.S. through the Davis Cup final.

Steffi Graf beat everybody before Monica Seles came back. Then Graf beat Seles.

1996: Sampras beats Agassi to the French Open title, becoming the first man since Rod Laver to win all four Grand Slam events.

Seles and Graf each take two Grand Slam titles in what could be Graf's last season at the top as her back problems worsen.

BOXING Mike Tyson emerged from prison looking relatively skinny and gained

South Africa's Gift To Rugby and Sports

International Herald Tribune

Many sports administrators talk of the "healing" power of their games, but most of them look like they're trying to win public relations brownie points or even (laughably) a Nobel Prize.

Nelson Mandela has already won a Nobel Prize. In 1995, South Africa and Mandela hosted the rugby World Cup and helped turn it into a celebration of sport.

Rugby was an apartheid sport through and through. It had served as a symbol for the white apartheid government throughout the decades of repression that ended with Mandela's election as president.

By recalling his personal hatred for rugby during his 27 years of imprisonment, and then, in the same breath, announcing his support for the South African team—all white but for the high-scoring wing, Chester Williams—Mandela turned a potential dangerous month into one of the most uplifting sports events.

His appearance at the final in Johannesburg wearing a Springboks cap and jersey said everything.

By inspiring his former enemies to win one for the new South Africa, Mandela set an example of reconciliation. If future regimes take after Mandela's example, if Mandela's rule isn't a blip in South African history, then something as incidental as a rugby tournament might become a timeless fable.

His handling of something as dangerous as South African rugby might have served as an example for America, which lacks a unifying national issue important enough to put the frivolities of baseball in their place. Most of the leading sports administrators in America carry themselves as if they're conducting shuttle diplomacy in the former Yugoslavia. The truth is, they all ought to be wearing golf shirts.

—IAN THOMSEN



Bernhard Langer, who won European Open but missed the Ryder Cup.

SCOREBOARD

BASKETBALL

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

W L Pct GB

Orlando 20 8 .706 —

New York 19 9 .680 1

Miami 18 10 .643 2

Washington 17 11 .607 3

Boston 16 12 .570 4

New Jersey 15 13 .533 5

Philadelphia 14 14 .500 6

CENTRAL DIVISION

W L Pct GB

Chicago 20 8 .706 —

Indiana 19 9 .680 1

Cleveland 18 10 .643 2

Atlanta 17 11 .607 3

Detroit 16 12 .570 4

Charlotte 15 13 .533 5

Milwaukee 14 14 .500 6

Toronto 13 15 .463 7

WESTERN CONFERENCE

NORTHWEST DIVISION

W L Pct GB

Houston 20 8 .706 —

San Antonio 19 9 .680 1

Utah 18 10 .643 2

Denver 17 11 .607 3

Dallas 16 12 .570 4

Minnesota 15 13 .533 5

Vancouver 14 14 .500 6

PACIFIC DIVISION

W L Pct GB

Seattle 20 8 .706 —

Sacramento 19 9 .680 1

LA Lakers 18 10 .643 2

Phoenix 17 11 .607 3

Portland 16 12 .570 4

LA Clippers 15 13 .533 5

Golden State 14 14 .500 6

HOCKEY

NHL STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

W L T Pts GF GA

Florida 25 8 2 52 125 81

N.Y. Rangers 23 9 2 48 112 92

Philadelphia 21 11 5 47 132 92

Washington 21 11 5 47 132 92

New Jersey 19 17 4 46 103 119

Toronto 19 17 4 46 103 119

N.Y. Islanders 22 5 2 49 120 79

NORTH DIVISION

W L T Pts GF GA

Pittsburgh 25 8 2 52 125 81

Montreal 23 9 2 48 112 92

Boston 21 11 5 47 132 92

Buffalo 21 11 5 47 132 92

Hartford 18 15 2 35 107 127

Ottawa 18 15 2 35 107 127

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

W L T Pts GF GA

Detroit 25 8 2 52 125 81

Toronto 23 9 2 48 112 92

Chicago 21 11 5 47 132 92

St. Louis 21 11 5 47 132 92

Winnipeg 19 17 4 46 103 119

Dallas 19 17 4 46 103 119

PACIFIC DIVISION

W L T Pts GF GA

Colorado 21 11 5 47 132 92

Los Angeles 21 11 5 47 132 92

Vancouver 21 11 5 47 132 92

San Jose 21 11 5 47 132 92

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS

N.Y. Islanders 2 3 3-3

New Jersey 2 1 2-3

First Period: N.Y. Islanders 1 (Thomas, Shewey) 1st, 2. N.J. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 2nd, 3. N.J. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 3rd, 4. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 4th, 5. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 5th, 6. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 6th, 7. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 7th, 8. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 8th, 9. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 9th, 10. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 10th, 11. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 11th, 12. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 12th, 13. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 13th, 14. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 14th, 15. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 15th, 16. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 16th, 17. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 17th, 18. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 18th, 19. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 19th, 20. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 20th, 21. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 21st, 22. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 22nd, 23. N.Y. Islanders 1 (Rosen, Zepke) 23rd, 24. N.Y. 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SPORTS

The Abuse of Women And the Sports Culture: Do Athletics Breed Contempt?

By Julie Cart
Los Angeles Times Service

STATISTICS on violence against women in the United States are staggering. There is an act of domestic violence every 18 seconds. One in three women experiences it. Abuse is the major cause of injury to women. Twenty-one percent of the women who use hospital emergency surgical services have been battered. More than 6 million women are beaten each year; 4,000 are killed.

Sports is not immune. In fact, scholars and social scientists concur that male athletes are more likely to be abusive toward women than other males.

A survey of 1995 newspaper and wire-service reports and court documents found 252 police incidents involving 345 active U.S. or Canadian sports figures. Of those, 77 incidents involve violence against women, the leading crime among athletes in each major sport.

That included some of the most high-profile crimes of the year:

- The Minnesota Vikings' quarterback Warren Moon is awaiting trial on a misdemeanor assault charge after allegedly slapping and choking his wife.

- Lawrence Phillips, a running back at the University of Nebraska and a Heisman Trophy candidate, was convicted of misdemeanor assault and trespassing after pleading no contest to charges that he attacked a former girlfriend and dragged her down a flight of stairs.

- A judge dismissed spousal abuse charges against the Atlanta Braves' manager, Bobby Cox, but ordered him to attend counseling for allegedly striking his wife.

The recent attention to it means we are starting to take it more seriously, and not (continuing) to be part of the conspiracy of silence and sweep it under the carpet with the attitude that "boys will be boys," said Michael Messner, an associate professor of sociology at the University of Southern California and co-author of the book, "Sex, Violence and Power in Sports: Rethinking Masculinity."

The language of sports speaks of dominance and aggression, but beyond the towel-snapping and sexual braggadocio of the locker room is the deeper question of whether the sports culture creates negative attitudes toward women, attitudes of superiority that could lead to violence.

"It isn't the only institution that trains men to be sexist, but it is a primary one," said Mariah Burton Nelson, author of the book, "The Stronger Women Get, The More Men Like Football: Sexism and the American Culture of Sports."

"It is not the sports themselves, but the culture of the sports in which male athletes and coaches talk about women with contempt. It begins with the Little League coach saying, 'You throw like a girl.' This teaches boys to feel superior."

"So masculinity is defined as aggression and dominance. In order to be a man, you have to be on top, to control, to dominate. We know this is not a 'male thing' — there are just as many men who don't rape or beat women. The culture of sports is a breeding ground. And we (society) enable them. They joke about it and nothing happens to them."

Some say that even as assault against women is recognized as an escalating crime, society doesn't see it as a problem. Certainly not within the sports community.

At the postgame news conference in State College, Pennsylvania, after Penn State lost to Texas in 1990, Coach Joe Paterno, in what was widely reported as a joke, said that he was so frustrated that he was "going to go home and beat my wife."

According to Sports Illustrated, after Cox was arrested in May for assaulting his wife, the former Braves' manager Dave Bristol said during a speech at the South Atlantic League All-Star game banquet in Albany, Georgia, "If I had that bullpen, I would have slit her throat."

"Elite athletes learn entitlement," said Jackson Katz of the Center for the Study of Sport in Society. "They believe they are entitled to have women serve their needs. It's part of being a man. The problem seems especially acute on college campuses. A study concluded this year at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and Northeastern University in Boston found that in colleges and universities, male student athletes were six times more involved than their nonathlete peers in sexual assault cases."

Yet, there seems to be a veil of denial in the athletic community. Coaches often complain that athletes are held to higher behavioral standards than others in society, then explain away athletes' misdeeds by noting that violence among them is simply a mirror of violence in society.

Many sports leaders who have so much to say about complex labor issues and racial equity have been largely silent about sexual assault and violence among athletes.

One athlete speaking out is the former Denver Broncos receiver Vance Johnson, who has admitted beating his first two wives. In his 1994 biography, Johnson said he saw poor role models for treatment of women growing up in Trenton, New Jersey.

"Everywhere I looked, men abused women," Johnson wrote. "There was absolutely no respect given to women in Trenton. All of the women were really battered and abused emotionally and physically. It was just a way of life, and no one ever did anything about it."

It is still happening. Two weeks ago, Lamont Riley, a star basketball player at Cal State San Bernardino, was readmitted to the team a day after pleading guilty to misdemeanor assault on his former girlfriend, an attack that she said left her with a fractured skull and separated shoulder.

"I thought the school would act morally right, but they didn't," Claudia Wilson said. "The way the coaches see it, if it wasn't a felony, it didn't really happen."

A few weeks ago, the football coach at Courtland High in Alabama refused to suspend two players who were among six people jailed on charges of raping a 14-year-old girl.

The players were expected to be starters for the team in that week's state championship game. Louis White, the coach, said the players were not suspended because the arrests involved an incident that happened away from school.

"We have a state championship game to prepare for, and that is all I have to say about the arrests," White said.

"Elite athletes learn entitlement. They believe they are entitled to have women serve their needs. It's part of being a man."



WINTER PLEASURES — Amateur skaters in the Netherlands making the most of the freeze, skating across the Zeldardmeer, which, if there is no thaw, will be the site of Dutch national skating championships later this week.

The Kid No One Wanted on Their Team With 31 TDs, Florida's Top Receiver Proved Them Wrong

By Jennifer Frey
Washington Post Service

GAINESSVILLE, Florida — Here in the heart of Gator country, Chris Doering forever will be remembered as the kid no one wanted. When the local faithful lined up on Saturday afternoon to watch Doering catch pass after pass for Florida the whispers in the stands were always the same. "He's the ooe," they would say, pointing to Doering, a wiry guy who wears uniform No. 28. "He's the local kid they wouldn't give a scholarship. He's the one they said couldn't play."

Paul Doering, Chris's father, can remember in detail the day his son was told exactly that — "You can't play" — by the football program at Florida, and he can remember the hot, wet tears his son wept that afternoon. It is a point of pride for the Doerings, a tale Paul loves to tell, no matter how painful it once was.

You see, Chris Doering proved them all wrong — proved them wrong with a flourish that deserves an "I told you so." A walk-on at Florida in 1991, Doering will take the field Jan. 2 for the Fiesta Bowl as the top wide receiver in the top offensive system in the country, with 1,045 yards this season and a Florida record 31 touchdown receptions for his career.

"He's earned everything that has come his way," Florida Coach Steve Spurrier said. "That's why it's extra-special. He earned it in scrimmages. He earned it in practice. He made a commitment, and he didn't let anything deter him along the way."

These days, Spurrier likes to joke about how one of his graduate assistants (long since gone from the program) once unleashed a profanity-laced tirade at Doering's high school receivers coach, who had come calling at the Florida offices with a videotape, hoping to get Doering a look. And Spurrier scratches his head when asked how it was possible that the Gators overlooked the ultimate kid next door.

It is hard to fathom. Doering's father taught at the university. His high school,

P.K. Yoo, is affiliated with Florida, and is a few blocks from the Gators' home field. Chris was a first-team, all-state player for the football team, a school-record holder, and a letter winner in three sports. His picture regularly graced the pages of the local Gainesville Sun.

"Oh, it made me angry then," Paul Doering said in a recent phone call. "Right in their own backyard was a student-athlete destined for greatness, and they just couldn't see it. And the other programs probably figured that since he wasn't recruited by his hometown school, there must be something wrong with him."

Those words are from a man still seeking an explanation for the slight his son suffered long ago. Paul Doering had been so certain of his son's success that he plotted a method for handling all of the attention that recruiters were sure to shower on his son.

There would be no calls after 11 P.M. There would be no calls between 6 and 7:30 P.M., so the family could enjoy dinner together. He would screen all requests, to lighten the load on Chris.

But the phone never rang, save for a few nibbles from Division II, onscholarship programs. Paul Doering would pull it from the wall, check the wires, wiggle the cord, make sure it was still working. It didn't seem possible that no one was calling. It didn't seem possible at all.

CHRIS WAS certain of only one thing: He wanted to go to Florida. He had been a Gator from birth, attending every home game, cheering every victory. He was waiting for ooe call, and one call only. When it finally came, the answer was a heartbreaking "no."

"I was a little bitter because I had shown so much support in the team for so many years, and for them to show me none — that hurt," said Doering, who eventually received a walk-on invitation from Florida, but only after the Gators found out about his intentions to walk on at rival Florida State. "But, in the end, I guess they've really paid me back the last couple of years."

The knock on Doering coming out of high school was his lack of speed. To this day, quarterback Danny Wuerffel (who considers Doering his best friend on the team, as well as his favorite target) likes to give Doering grief about his slow feet. But Wuerffel, for one, doesn't consider it a drawback.

"I may tease him about it," Wuerffel said, "but he's the quickest person off the ball. And he always knows how to get open."

DOERING'S breakthrough moment as a Gator came in his first start, against Kentucky in the second game of the 1993 season. Just prior to the start of that season, Doering finally had been awarded a football scholarship, the announcement prompting hoots of joy from his teammates.

And that afternoon in Lexington, he caught six passes for 95 yards, the final pass a 28-yard, game-winning touchdown pass from Wuerffel.

That reception has become known in Florida as "The Play," this highlight of Doering's Gator career. But the reception Doering made in the second quarter of the Florida-Florida State game Nov. 25 — the reception that broke the Florida and Southeastern Conference records — is the one he forever will hold dearest to his heart.

"To set the record here, in my final game at this stadium, and to win the game, I can't tell you how much that means to me," Doering said that day, tears in his eyes.

As a 10-year-old, Doering was in the stands on the day that Wilber Marshall — one of the greatest linebackers in Florida history — ran into the stands in his final game at Florida Field, high-fiving the fans. Doering didn't get to slap hands with Marshall, but he remembered how he felt. After his final Florida game, Doering repeated Marshall's gesture.

"It actually took my breath away," said Paul Doering, who, as always, was in the stands with his wife, Cheryl. "It was unbelievable to think that this was the kid who nobody wanted."

Bullets' Webber Ruins Return of Warrior Rookie

The Associated Press

Chris Webber wasn't simply inspired by playing against his former Golden State Warriors teammates. He was not going to be shown up by a rookie.

Webber made the homecoming of Joe

NBA ROUNDPUP

Smith — the first overall pick by the Warriors in last spring's draft — a sorry one, finishing with a career-high 40 points, plus 10 rebounds and 10 assists, as the Washington Bullets defeated the Warriors, 115-94, Wednesday night.

Webber made 18 of 25 shots to top his previous career best of 37 points as Washington snapped a three-game losing streak. His fifth career triple-double came in Smith's first game in the area since leaving the University of Maryland. Smith scored 27 points last week in the Warriors' 132-117 home rout of Washington.

"I had a lot of incentive. There were a lot of people teasing me about Joe doing so well against us," Webber said. "I knew he'd be excited about coming home, but this is our house."

Clippers 116, Hornets 107 Los Angeles ended Charlotte's six-game home winning streak on the strength of Brian Williams' 25 points. Loy Vaught added 22 points for the Clippers, who won for only the fourth time in 14 road games this season.

Bucks 99, Timberwolves 93 Sherman Douglas, who scored a season-high 24 points, sent the game into overtime on a basket with 4.9 seconds left, and Glenn Robinson scored five of his 19 points in overtime for visiting Milwaukee. Douglas made a running floater over Christian Laettner from six feet to send the game into overtime.

In other games, the Phoenix Suns beat the Philadelphia 76ers, 105-90; the Portland Trail Blazers routed the Boston Celtics, 135-109 and the Seattle SuperSonics beat the Denver Nuggets, 99-83.

Hard-Luck Ottawa Gets A Respite From Losing

The Associated Press

After losing eight straight, the Ottawa Senators had the good fortune to face an 18-year-old rookie goalie making his second National Hockey League start.

Ottawa took advantage, scoring a power-play goal with less than two minutes

NHL ROUNDPUP

remaining and holding on for a 4-3 victory Wednesday night over the Buffalo Sabres.

Visiting Ottawa, 1-13-1 in its previous 15 games, beat Buffalo's goalie, Martin Biron, who was making his second start in two nights since being called up from the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League.

Others 3, Flyers 2 The Philadelphia Flyers, winless in Edmonton for almost 11 years, lost in front of the Oilers' first sellout crowd in two seasons.

"It makes it a lot easier to play when you have 17,000 fans behind you," said Kelly Buchberger, whose goal with 4:14 remaining kept the Flyers winless in Northlands Coliseum since Jan. 2, 1985.

Buchberger's game-winning goal, which came on a delayed penalty call, trickled across the goal line.

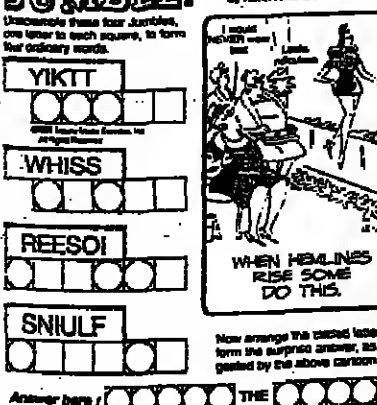
In other games, New Jersey beat the New York Islanders, 5-3; Calgary beat Toronto, 4-0, and Los Angeles beat Anaheim, 7-1.

DENNIS THE MENACE



I TURNED ON THE CHAIR, BUT SHE STILL TURNED OFF THE TV.

JUMBLE



Answer here: 1. WHISS 2. REESOI 3. SNULF

LOUISE, GIANT HAZARD THWART

What the winning crew have composed their good words — WORTH A RAZE.

To our readers in Berlin

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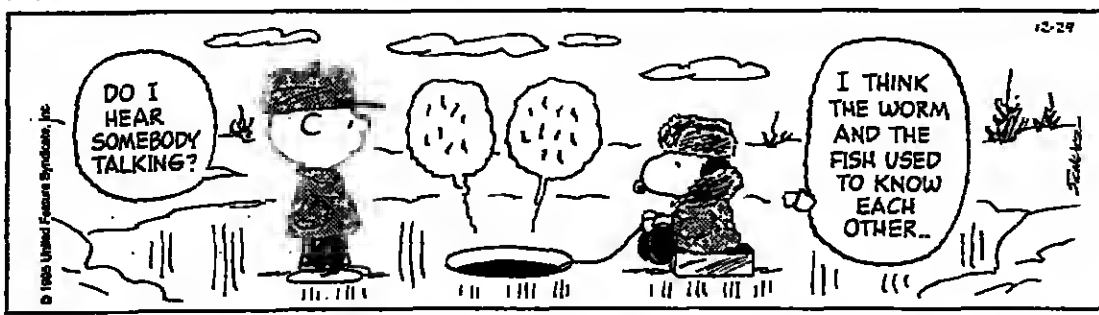
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PEANUTS



GARFIELD



BEEBLE BAILEY



DOONESBURY FLASHBACKS



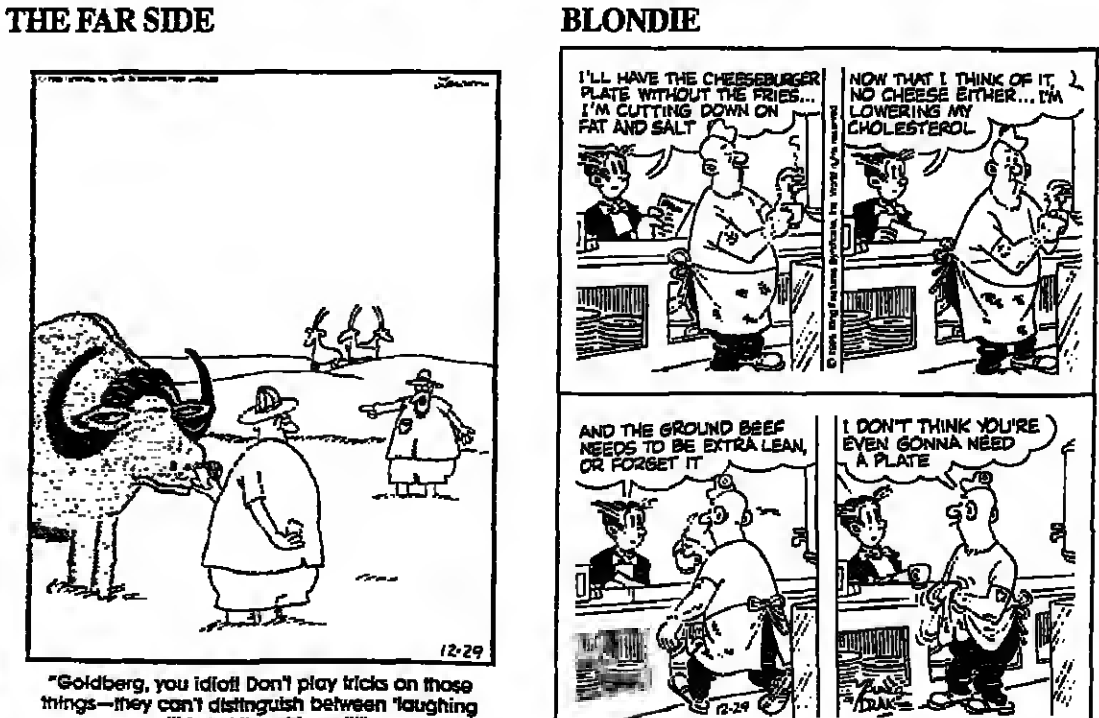
CALVIN AND HOBBES



WIZARD OF ID



THE FAR SIDE



"Goldberg, you idiot! Don't play tricks on those things—they can't distinguish between laughing with and laughing at!"

BLONDIE



Actress Joan Allen's Compassion for Pat Nixon

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Hungary	000-900-01111	Cyprus*	008-90010	Bolivia*	0-200-7712
Iceland	000-9001	Egypt* (Cairo)*	570-6280	Brazil	000-9010
Ireland	1-800-550-000	Israel	177-150-2720	Canada	1-800-225-6286
Italy	172-1011	Jordan	18-000-900	Chile	1-22-4-9311
Lithuania*	80196	Kuwait	800-599	Colombia	000-71-9010
Luxembourg	0-300-0111	Lebanon (Beirut)*†	625-971	Ecuador	001
Macedonia, FYR***	99-300-4288	Oman	0000-611-77	El Salvador	190
Malta	0000-900-110	Saudi Arabia	7-80-10	Costa Rica	126
Monaco	19-0011	Syria	0-801	Honduras	123
Netherlands*	05-022-9111	U. Arab Emirates*	800-121	Mexico**	85-000-402-4000
Norway	800-198-11			Nicaragua	174
Poland**	00918-480-0111	AFRICA		Paraguay	179
Portugal†	05017-1-288	Botswana	800-061	Peru**	171
Romania*	01-900-000	Gambia*	00111	Puerto Rico	001-721
Russia† (Moscow)	155-6042	Ghana	0181	Venezuela*	90-911-1201
Slovak Rep.*	00-422-00101	Ivory Coast*	09-111-11		
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